Languages of Political Identity: Visconti Historiography and the Making of the Territorial State

William Kolkey
Magdalen College

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Short Abstract

This thesis is about the political communities that organized the urban life of the Visconti territorial state. It is about the languages used by these communities to give structure and meaning to their identities. And it is about how the emergence of the territorial state challenged the form and function of these languages of political identity. It is a weighty topic, so to render it manageable, this study is limited to deconstructing the political languages of Visconti historiography from 1329 to 1402, a period that extends from the onset of the signoria of Azzone Visconti to the death of Gian Galeazzo. It focuses on texts from four urban centres: Milan, Monza, Novara, and Piacenza.

In Milan, the chronicles of the Dominican friar Galvano Fiamma interpret the history of the Ambrosian City through various factional lenses, with each text recounting events from the perspective of either Milan's *populus*, nobility, or merchants. This allows Fiamma to legitimate the monarchism of the Visconti within the mental frameworks of Milan's various social constituencies. In Monza, the chronicle of Bonincontro Morigia constitutes a particularly unique example of a *quasi-città*'s usage of biblical metaphor (drawn from 1 and 2 Maccabees) to defend the sovereignty of the Visconti territorial state and Monza's status therein as a Lombard Jerusalem. In Novara, the histories of Pietro Azario articulate the values of northern Italy's *populares*, championing their enduring relevance in a political system that, Azario feared, threatened those values' survival. Finally, in Piacenza, the history of Giovanni Musso is an example of how a Ghibelline social memory could be used to reframe the relationship of a city's *milites* and *populus* with the empire and Visconti. Studying the political languages of these texts is important for deepening our understanding of how the territorial state impacted the mental categories of local communities.

Long Abstract

This thesis is about the political communities that organized the urban life of the Visconti territorial state. It is about the languages used by these communities to give structure and meaning to their identities. And it is about how the emergence of the territorial state challenged the form and function of these languages of political identity. It is a weighty topic, so to render it manageable, this study will be limited to deconstructing the political languages of Visconti historiography from 1329 to 1402, a period that extends from the onset of the signoria of Azzone Visconti to the death of Gian Galeazzo. It will focus on texts from four urban centres: Milan, Monza, Novara, and Piacenza.

The thesis is divided into four main chapters, each focusing on the histories of a particular author. We begin with **Galvano Fiamma**, a friar and courtier of the Visconti. The most prolific of this thesis's historians, Fiamma wrote nine histories on political and Dominican topics. The chapter will focus on four of the friar's texts: three are broad historical narratives of Milan – the *Manipulus Florum*, the so-called *Galvagnana*, and the *Chronicon Maius*; the fourth is the *Opusculum*, a condensed history covering events from 1328 to 1343. With the exception of the *Opusculum* (composed in 1343), Fiamma's histories were written in the 1330s, during the reign of Azzone Visconti, when the regime was abandoning the pretence of ruling within communal law to assume the trappings of a monarchy. Fiamma's histories can be understood as a contribution to this programme. His first three histories populate Milan's early past with kings, counts, viscounts, and dukes, offering a typological precedent for the monarchical lordship of the signoria. Indeed, in the *Chronicon Maius*, a genealogical tree even identifies the Visconti as the descendants of Count Anglus Anglerie, the noble son of the Trojan prince Aeneas. Evidence of royal lineage is given explicit meaning in the *Opusculum*, which declares that the virtuous Visconti, though technically *capitanei*, were very nearly *reges*.

But the genius of Fiamma's programme lies in its integration of this monarchical language with the collective memories of Milan's factions. The *Manipulus Florum* offers a popular narrative, focusing on the persecution of the *populus* by a series of laws promulgated by the nobility, the statutes *in odium populi*. Relief from oppression comes from a series of archetypal monarchical figures, ranging from Milan's regime of ancient dukes to the Visconti, whose legitimacy

derives from their protection of the *populus*. The *Galvagnana* rewrites the city's history to favour the perspective of the urban aristocracy, with the chronicle mainly functioning to validate the faction's control over Milan's Cathedral Chapter (an ancient prerogative of the nobility) by drawing attention to the nobility's intimate relationship with the city's archbishops, from Saint Ambrose to Ottone Visconti. The *Chronicon Maius* is sensitive to the experience of Milan's merchants, whose interests are tied to the commercialism of the signoria. The *Opusculum*, by contrast, is the only text that attempts to provide a neutral narrative, emphasising the shared fidelity of Milan's factions to the benevolent and magnanimous Visconti – appealing to the political sentiments of a civically minded public. Altogether, Fiamma's histories are testaments to the enduring relevance of factionalism to the creation of political legitimacy, with each text functioning to reconcile the social mindset of a faction to the authoritarian rule of the Visconti lords.

As we leave Milan for its contado, we can appreciate another advocate for the regime in **Bonincontro Morigia**, a well-born Ghibelline from the *quasi-città* Monza. Morigia's *Chronicon Modoetiense* was written during the reign of Giovanni Visconti. It covers events from Julius Caesar to the repatriation of Monza's stolen treasury in 1344, but its primary focus is on the war fought between the Visconti and the Guelphs in the 1320s and early 1330s. Morigia uniquely imposes onto the narrative the thematic and rhetorical constructs of the first and second book of Maccabees, the story of the Jewish uprising against Seleucid rule. The Lombards are refashioned as God's chosen people; John XXII's legate is the Seleucid king Antiochus IV; and Monza is Jerusalem. Just as the books of Maccabees had concealed divisions between traditional and Hellenized Jews to frame the Maccabean war as primarily a struggle for independence, Morigia's narrative creates a false sense of Lombard unity by representing the conflict with the Guelphs as primarily a war between Lombards and the foreign mercenaries of the pope. The rhetoric is pseudo-patriotic, defending the autonomy of a loosely defined *Lombardia*. Within this pseudo-nationalist construct, however, the text affords Monza a political and religious exceptionalism, rooting this privileged identity in the *quasi-città*'s possession of the Basilica of Saint John, rendered as an Italian Temple of Solomon.

Morigia's *Chronicon* is also notable for a theory of absolutism. "The prince is the foundation of the people", Morigia says. "He is the father of his country. All others ought to be ruled and governed by his justice." Morigia's prince alone has

liberum arbitrium, allowing him to augment the *res publica* (his preferred term for the state) with *iustitia*, "to calm the body and save the soul." This is rhetoric that combines monarchical and communitarian languages from patristic, Italian, and Roman sources. In particular there are parallels between Morigia's conception of absolutism and that of Seneca's *De Clementia.* The inclusion of this rhetoric speaks to the receptiveness of *quasi-città* to the absolutism of the signoria. The assimilation of this ideology is arguably sensible, given the signoria's role in protecting the privileges of rural localities against the claims of the city (a protection that Monza benefited from).

Pietro Azario, an historian from Novara, represents a less compromising attitude toward the monarchical politics of the centre. A talented notary, Azario witnessed first hand the violence engendered by Visconti policy while serving as an army bureaucrat during Galeazzo Visconti's campaign to recapture a rebellious Bologna. His *Chronicon de Gestis Principum Vicecomitum* is a contemporary account of this war and other events in the western half of the Visconti territorial state up to 1364, with a focus on the local politics of Novara and, to a lesser extent, Pavia. For the most part, the *Chronicon* is subtle in expressing its hostility toward the Visconti, whose regime is conflated with Novara's foreign and ineffectual podestà. “During the regime of consuls”, Azario explains, “our city always acquired.” During the podestaria, however, “the city always declined”. As an alternative to the consolidation of signorial power, Azario upholds the ideal of the *popularis status*, a political community expressive of the values of the urban *populus*. Azario applies the terminology to regimes in Pavia, Genoa, the rural Canavese (in modern Piedmont), and Novara, whose very origins are identified with the efforts of the *popularis status* to create an urban refuge against the violence of the rural nobility. Like Fiamma's *Manipulus Florum*, Azario's *Chronicon* is fundamentally reflective of a popular social memory.

For Azario, the recent plight of the *popularis status* is a morality tale. In his much shorter work on the Canavese, the *Opusculum de Bello Canapiciiano*, he laments the "yoke of perpetual servitude" of the princes of Savoy and the marquis of Montferrat, which subjugated the popular communities of the region to their dominion, and opines that this would have been avoided had the Canavese's inhabitants overcome their internal divisions to present a unified front. In the *Chronicon*, Azario faults Novara, too, for its internal discord, while admiring in Pavia

the ability of the priest Bussolaro to unify the city's *populus* to resist the aggressions of Galeazzo II. The pseudo-republican language of Azario's texts is nevertheless tempered by a political realism. Rather than categorically reject the legitimacy of the Visconti territorial state, the *Chronicon* attempts to limit its mandate by holding it accountable to a system of values that equates good governance with low taxation and populism. Somewhat ironically, the authoritarian Bernabò is raised as a model of benign lordship, specifically praised for improving the plight of a *rusticus* who had suffered at the hands of his oppressive lord. Azario is this thesis's only notary author, as well as the only writer critical of signorial monarchism.

The thesis closes with **Giovanni Musso**'s *Chronicon Placentinum*. Written between 1386 and 1402, the *Chronicon* is a "Ghibelline" history, channelling the imperial ideology and anti-clerical language used by the Ghibelline party in the early Trecento, a language shaped by the polemics of radical Franciscans, Dante's *Monarchia*, and Marsilius of Padua's *Defensor Pacis*, among other sources. The Ghibellinism of the *Chronicon* is a response to the Visconti's conflict in the 1370s with Gregory XI, whose apparent pretensions to temporal lordship in central and northern Italy had superficial similarities to John XXII's ambitions in Lombardy at the beginning of the century. The similarities engendered a familiar debate over papal hierocracy and clerical poverty. Sympathetic to the church was Pietro da Ripalta, a citizen of Piacenza and the author of the *Chronica Placentina*, a philo-clerical history of Piacenza. Musso's *Chronicon* is a revision of this text, adapted to justify Visconti lordship and to stigmatise the church as the author of a millennium of violence.

But the real genius of Musso's history lies in its account of the Duecento and early Trecento, when power in Piacenza was contested by several aristocratic clans from the countryside. Musso deviates from Ripalta to impose onto the narrative the political categories found in the *Annales Gibellini* (a 13th-century civic chronicle) to represent urban conflict as a competition between the *pars Imperatoris and pars Ecclesiae* (Ripalta, instead, represented events as a struggle between the *populus* and *milites*). Effectively, Musso is projecting the political conflict with Gregory XI onto the long narrative of Piacenza's history, imagined as a centuries-long contest between the empire and church. Musso aligns the *pars Imperatoris* with the interests of Piacenza's *populus* and the Visconti, while the *pars Ecclesiae* is represented as the source of urban conflict – further proof of Musso's charge that the church was an author of violence. These categories, significantly, are also used to arbitrate the

legitimacy of the various clans in the city, with the *Chronicon* aggrandising the lordship of the Landi, Pallavicini, and Fontanesi as supporters of the *pars Imperatoris*, while vilifying the Pallastrelli and the Scotti as supporters of the *pars Ecclesiae*. The history is a rare example of the articulation and projection of the signoria's Ghibellinism onto the local memory of the periphery.

The diversity of textual languages was a product of a state that was itself socially and politically diverse. We hope in this thesis to expose some of the variety of ways this diversity was expressed, as well as the important role of historiography as a medium for communicating identity and power. The result should be a deeper understanding of the territorial state and the political communities from which it was formed.

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Abbreviations

Primary Texts

APG	"Annales Placentini Gibellini", in G.H. Pertz (ed.) *MGH*, *Tomus Scriptorum*, 18 (Hannover, 1863).
BM	Bonincontro Morigia, "Chronicon Modoetiense", in LA Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 12 (Milano, 1728).
CD	A. Cinquini (ed.), "Una cronaca milanese inedita del secolo XIII. La Chronica Danielis", *Miscellanea di storia e cultura ecclesiastica*, 4 (1905- 1906).
CE	Galvano Fiamma, "Chronicon Extravagans", in A. Ceruti (ed.) *Chronicon extravagans et Chronicon Maius auctore Galvano Flamma*, *Miscellanea Storica Italiana*, 7 (1869).
CE A275	Milano: Biblioteca Ambrosiana MS A 275 inf, *Chronicon Extravagans*.
CM	Galvano Fiamma, "Chronicon Maius", in A. Ceruti (ed.) *Chronicon extravagans et Chronicon Maius auctore Galvano Flamma*, *Miscellanea Storica Italiana*, 7 (1869).
CM A275	Milano: Biblioteca Ambrosiana MS A 275 inf, *Chronicon Maius*.
GA	Milano: Biblioteca Ambrosiana MS A 329 inf, *Galvagnana*.
Landolfo	Landulfus Senior, "Historia Mediolanensis", in W. Wattenbach and L. Bethman (eds.) *MGH*, *Tomus Scriptorum*, 8 (Hannover, 1898).
MF	Galvano Fiamma, "Galvanei Flammae Manipulus florum sive historia Mediolanensis ab origine urbis ad a. circiter 1336", in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 11 (Milano, 1727).
Musso	G. Musso, “Chronicon Placentinum”, in L.A. Muratori (ed.), *RIS*, 16 (Milano, 1730).
Opusculum	Galvano Fiamma, "Opusculum de rebus gestis ab Azone, Luchino et Iohanne, vicecomitibus ab a. 1328 ad a. 1342", in C. Castiglioni (ed.) *RIS*, 12/4 (Bologna, 1938).
Wales	Johannes Gallensis, *Communiloquium sive summa collationum Johannis Gallensis* (Augsburg, 1475) [accessible online at http://web.wlu.ca/history/cnighman/Communiloquium.pdf].

Journals

ASI	*Archivio Storico Italiano*
ASL	*Archivio Storico Lombardo*
BISI	*Bullettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano*
BSP	*Bollettino Storico Piacentino*
RSI	*Rivista Storica Italiana*
JMH	*Journal of Medieval History*
NRS	*Nuova Rivista Storica*

Books

DBI	*Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*
MGH	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*
RIS	*Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*

Introduction

This thesis is about the political communities that organized the urban life of the Visconti territorial state. It is about the languages used by these communities to give structure and meaning to their identities. And it is about how the emergence of the territorial state challenged the form and function of these languages of political identity. It is a weighty topic, so to render it manageable, this study will be limited to deconstructing the political languages of Visconti historiography from 1329 to 1402, a period that extends from the onset of the signoria of Azzone Visconti to the death of Gian Galeazzo. It will focus on texts from four urban centres: Milan, Monza, Novara, and Piacenza.

A History of the Visconti Territorial State

All history is a history of change, but the events contained within the temporal limits of this thesis are particularly dramatic for their break with the past. The Trecento witnessed the rise and ascendancy of the Visconti signoria, the consolidation of political power around centralised courts, and the absorption of the central Po Valley's once autonomous communities into a single territorial state. Chroniclers of the Trecento, "tormented and troubled by the constant sorrows and hardships engendered by recent events", wrote their histories in order to impose order onto this period of transition, to charge events with a political and social meaning that could create a sense of structure and continuity.[1] The purviews of their texts are often narrow, reflecting the parochial concerns of political communities of diverse status and geographical origin. Where they compare is in their interest in the emerging territorial state and its impact on local communities.

In Milan, the chronicles of the Dominican friar Galvano Fiamma interpret the history of the Ambrosian City through various factional lenses, with each text recounting events from the perspective of either Milan's *populus*, nobility, or merchants. The social memories of these factions are interwoven with the memory of the past patronage of kings, counts, dukes, and archbishops, whose benign and

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[1] P. Azario, *Chronicon de Gestis Principium Vicecomitum*, in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 16 (Milano, 1730), p. 297: *...cruciatus et exercitatus doloribus et angustiis perimmensis propter occurentia...conatus sum causas praecedentes, ex quibus in Lombardia orta sunt scandala, studiosius pertractare.*

monarchic lordship anticipates the Visconti signoria. Fiamma's texts thus expose the variety of historical analogies and antecedents that might have been used by Milan's factions to model their relationship with the Visconti court. In Monza, the chronicle of Bonincontro Morigia constitutes a particularly unique example of a *quasi-città*'s usage of biblical metaphor (drawn from 1 and 2 Maccabees) to defend the sovereignty of the Visconti territorial state and Monza's status therein as a Lombard Jerusalem. In Novara, the histories of Pietro Azario articulate the values of northern Italy's *populares*, championing their enduring relevance in a political system that, Azario feared, threatened those values' survival. Finally, in Piacenza, the history of Giovanni Musso is an example of how a Ghibelline social memory could be used to reframe the relationship of a city's *milites* and *populus* with the empire and Visconti. Studying the political languages of these texts is useful and important for deepening our understanding of how the territorial state challenged and reshaped the mental categories of local communities.

But before discussing these histories further, it is worthwhile, for the sake of contextualising their narratives, to summarise events in the history of Milan across this period.[2]

Milan had been ruled by the Visconti signoria since 1277, the date of the victory of Ottone Visconti over his rival Napoleone Torriani on the field of Desio. The regime initially preferred to exercise power through informal mechanisms and within the legal framework of Milan's quasi-representative institutions. This delicate balancing act proved precarious. In 1302, Milan's *populus*, with the help of foreign signori, exiled the Visconti.[3] Eight years later, however, the Visconti were back in Milan by invitation of King Henry VII, on his way to becoming emperor in Rome and intent on restoring imperial authority to northern Italy. The Visconti were appointed as his vicars, resuming lordship of the Ambrosian City in his name.[4] Though Henry tried to be politically impartial, the appearance of favouritism precipitated a regional war between Ghibellines loyal to him and Guelphs loyal to Pope John XXII.

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[2] A positivist history of the territorial state can be found in *Storia di Milano*, Fondazione Treccani, 5 (Milano, 1955). Also see, for brief introductions, F. Somaini, "Processi costitutivi, dinamiche politiche e strutture istituzionali dello Stato visconteo-sforzesco", in G. Andenna, R. Bordone, F. Somaini, and M. Vallerani (eds.) *Comuni e signorie nell'Italia settentrionale: La Lombardia. Storia d'Italia*, 6 (Torino, 1998), pp. 681-786; A. Gamberini and F. Somaini, *L'età dei Visconti e degli Sforza* (Milano, 2001), pp. 21-29.

[3] P. Grillo, *Milano guelfa: 1302-1310* (Roma, 2013), pp. 45-47.

[4] On Henry VII's expedition in Italy, see W. Bowsky, *Henry VII in Italy: the conflict of empire and city-state, 1310-1313* (Lincoln, 1960).

Henry VII died in 1313, and after the German electors failed to agree on a successor, Pope John XXII promulgated the bull *Si fratrum* to devolve stewardship of the empire to the papacy. In an attempt to reorganise northern Italy under Guelph lordship, he demanded that Matteo Visconti, then lord of Milan, renounce his imperial vicariate. Matteo refused, provoking the excommunication of the Visconti and the placement of their territories under interdict. John XXII called for a crusade to remove Italy's Ghibelline lords by force. By 1322, the Guelphs had succeeded in wresting control of Piacenza and Monza, placing nearby Milan under direct threat. The military situation was soon reversed, but the Visconti's political position was again destabilised by the advent into Italy of Louis of Bavaria, with ambitions of succeeding Henry VII as emperor and would-be master of northern Italy. He entered Milan in 1327 and exiled the Visconti, but was soon forced by pecuniary concerns to restore the dynasty to power, selling them an imperial vicariate worth 125,000 florins.

The fortunes of the Visconti improved markedly during the reign of Azzone Visconti, who succeeded to power in 1329. Within a decade, the Milanese territorial state had expanded to include Cremona, Como, Crema, Lodi, Bergamo, Brescia, Vercelli, and Novara. The war with the papacy was negotiated to an end in 1331, with Azzone receiving a papal vicariate and his cousin, Giovanni, recognition as bishop of Novara. These successes occurred as the regime engineered an unprecedented consolidation of power. Milan's General Assembly was reduced from 1200 to 900 members, with their method of selection revised to ensure they were creatures of the signore. Constitutional change was justified with the language and imagery of monarchism, beginning the regime's transition to a more authoritarian form of rule.[5]

Azzone was succeeded in 1339 by his cousins Luchino and Giovanni, who extended dominion of the territorial state to include parts of Piedmont and (temporarily) Bologna and Genoa. In 1354, Giovanni's sons – Marco, Bernabò, and Galeazzo II – inherited a state that was both highly pluralistic (with the signoria recognising the limited autonomies of towns, castles, and rural and mountain communities at the expense of cities' traditional authority) but was also increasingly centralised around a Visconti court inclined to reform local statutes and restructure territorial orders.[6] Marco died shortly after assuming power (probably killed by his

[5] F. Cengarle, "La signoria di Azzone Visconti tra prassi, retorica e iconografia (1329-1339)", in M. Vallerani (ed.) *Tecniche di potere nel tardo medioevo* (Rome, 2010), pp.101-116.
[6] Somaini, "Processi constitutivi", pp. 751-2.

brothers). Bernabò and Galeazzo II divided administrative duties, with Galeazzo II presiding over the western half of the territorial state and Bernabò its eastern half. The lords exercised very different forms of power. Galeazzo II deferred to the decisions of localities and respected the rule of urban statutes. Bernabò invoked a doctrine of *plenitudo potestatis* to justify the derogation of statutes and the further centralisation of authority in his person. "Do you not know that I am the pope and emperor and lord in all my lands", he declared, "and that neither the emperor, or indeed God, could do anything in my lands except what I want and intend to do?"[7] In military matters, the brothers coordinated strategy in order to sustain their rule against enemies internal and external, successfully resisting several anti-Visconti leagues. Reggio and Pavia were acquired, with the latter soon becoming a second capital of the territorial state.

In 1378 Galeazzo II was succeeded by his son Gian Galeazzo. In 1385, he engineered the overthrow of Bernabò to become sole master of the Visconti dominions. His rise inaugurated a rapid period of expansion, fuelled both by conquest and clever diplomacy. At its greatest extent (1402), the Visconti state stretched from Belluno and Bormio in the north to Verona and Vicenza in the east to Pisa and Siena in the south to Vercelli and Alessandria in the west. The tide of expansion overcame several military coalitions led by Florence, which itself came close to being subsumed by the Visconti wave. This ambitious programme appeared to receive validation in 1395 by Emperor Wenceslaus's concession of a ducal title to Gian Galeazzo. Contemporaries believed that the Visconti lord might leverage his success to become king. But these hopes were dashed by his unexpected death in 1402.[8] In the absence of mature heirs, the territorial state disintegrated. When it was re-formed under the strong rule of Filippo Maria Visconti (1412-1447), it was with more modest, albeit durable, borders, stretching from Bellinzona in the north to Parma in the east to Pontremoli in the south to Alessandria in the west. Bergamo, Brescia, and Crema, however, were annexed by the Venetian state.

This period of political consolidation and territorial expansion challenged the autonomies of cities and the many social and territorial bodies that had together structured northern Italy's political order. "When traditional relationships between

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[7] F. Cognasso, "Istituzioni comunali e signorili di Milano sotto i Visconti", in *Storia di Milano*, 5, p. 537: *Nescis, pultrone, quod ego sum Papa et Imperator ac Dominus in omnibus terris meis, et quod nec imperator, imo nec Deus, posset in terris meis facere, nisi quod vellem ac intendo quod faciat?*

[8] On Gian Galeazzo, see D.M. Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan* (Cambridge, 1941). Somewhat more recent, but not as good, is E.R. Chamberlin, *The Count of Virtue: Giangaleazzo Visconti, First Duke of Lombardy* (London, 1965).

present and past break down", Geary observes, "those most affected by this rupture respond by reshaping an understanding of that which unites past and present in terms of some new continuity in order to defend themselves from the effect of this rupture."[9] History-writing in the Trecento served precisely this purpose, given that the period was one of such sharp and often alarming change in the political systems of the Po plain. It is the goal of this thesis to unpick its layers of meaning, in order to understand how diverse communities used their historiography to understand and even shape the making of the territorial state.

Scholarship on Communities

This topic is heir to two themes of modern scholarship. The first is the study of the social and territorial bodies that formally and informally structured the Italian state, an area of research fuelled by the absorption of sociological, anthropological, and German methodologies into Italian scholarship.[10] Broadly (but not exhaustively) representative of the results of this process are the works of Chittolini, historical surveys written by Pini and Somaini, and essays on Tuscany edited by Connell and Zorzi.[11] The achievement of the last few decades has been to definitively displace the Burckhardtian vision of the Renaissance principality as a precursor to modernity, instead reimagining the territorial state as a space in which various corporate actors negotiated for influence.[12] The signoria remains at the centre of this process, but is no longer the political centrifuge described by Chabod, who imagined a court that concentrated around itself political authority while gradually rationalising the political landscape with its refined bureaucracy and professional *esprit de corps*.[13] To the contrary, the signoria and its officials operated within a framework of overlapping

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[9] P. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, 1994), p. 8, summarizing J. Pocock, "The Origins of the Study of the Past", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 4 (1962), p. 217.
[10] Surveyed in G. Chittolini, "The 'Private,' the 'Public,' the State", in J. Kirshner (ed.) *The Origins of the State in Italy, 1300-1600* (Chicago, 1996). See essays in A. Gamberini and I. Lazzarini (ed.), *The Italian Renaissance State* (Cambridge, 2012).
[11] These studies give a broad overview of the change in academic perspective: A.I. Pini, "Dal comune città-stato al comune ente amministrativo", in O. Capitani (ed.) *Comuni e signorie: istituzioni, società e lotte per l'egemonia. Storia d'Italia*, 4 (Torino, 1981). Somaini, "Processi costitutivi". A. Zorzi and W. Connell (eds.) *Lo stato territoriale fiorentino* (Pisa, 2002). G. Chittolini, *La formazione dello stato regionale e le istituzioni del contado* (Torino, 1979). G. Chittolini, *Città, comunità e feudi negli stati dell'Italia centro settentrionale: secoli XIV-XVI* (Milano, 1996).
[12] G. Chittolini, "The Private, the Public and the State", p. 45.
[13] F. Chabod, "Was There a Renaissance State?", in H. Lubasz (ed.) *The Development of the Modern State* (New York, 1964).

kin, party, and factional interests, prone to act through both formal and informal mechanisms.[14] What defines the Renaissance state, and, indeed, the structure of the *ancién regime***,** is this co-existence between the private and the public – that complex and complementary system of relationships between nominally state institutions and autonomous factions, parties, corporations, religious communities, clans, and guilds.

This may be to exaggerate the death of the statist model, which has recently undergone something of a revival.[15] Still, there is no ignoring the definitive role of recent scholarship in exposing the active participation of social and territorial bodies in a political system that was continually being redefined.[16] We have seen already that the historiography produced during the Trecento testifies to the dynamism of social and territorial groups, offering insight into the variety of discursive strategies and rhetorical techniques that they used to assert their ancient autonomies, identities, and political values. Of particular relevance to this thesis are the *milites* and *populus*, the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, and *quasi-città*. These are the protagonists of our Trecento histories. It is therefore worthwhile to introduce these subjects formally, with consideration as to how their form and function has been represented in recent scholarship.

We begin with the fundamental political units of the medieval city of north-central Italy: the *populus* and the *milites*. From the early 20th century, the study of these factions has tended to emphasise their composite social memberships, repudiating the argument of Salvemini's *Magnati e popolani* (1899) that considered factions a feature of class conflict. [17] The *populus* were comprised of merchants, wealthy guildsmen, and high-level manufacturers, but also included representatives of the aristocracy, whose military expertise recommended their leadership of the faction.[18] By contrast, the *milites*, though indisputably a product of the social world of the feudal countryside, attracted newly ascendant families from the urban sphere, in

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[14] A. Zorzi, "I Fiorentini e gli uffici pubblici del primo Quattrocento: concorrenza, abusi, illegalità", *Quaderni storici*, 22 (1987). Chittolini, "The Private, the Public and the State", p. 46.
[15] J. Kirshner, "Introduction: The State is 'Back in'", in *The Origins of the State in Italy*.
[16] Debate continues over how much emphasis ought to be afforded to the political influence of the centre as opposed to peripheral groups. See M. Della Misericordia, "La Lombardia composita. Pluralismo politico-istituzionale e gruppi sociali nel secolo X-XVI", *ASL*, 124-5 (1998-1999).
[17] G. Salvemini, *Magnati e popolani in Firenze dal 1280 al 1295* (Milano, 1899).
[18] G. Chittolini, "Uno sguardo a ritroso", in G. Delille and A. Savelli (eds*.) Essere popolo. Prerogative e rituali d'appartenenza nelle città italiane d'antico regime* (Firenze, 2000), p. 164.

addition to families of more ancient noble lineage.[19] Considering that both factions were led by aristocrats, Ottokar's study (1926) of Florentine factionalism re-conceptualized them as vertical networks that represented divisions within the urban oligarchy.[20] This model for factional conflict, however, goes too far the other way, for it ignores the very real social differences that contributed to the unique language and purpose of the *populus*. [21] More recently, both Koenig and Tabacco have stressed the capacity of the *populus* to give political access to social groups – notaries, wealthy guildsmen, and middling merchants – that had been excluded from power by the consular regimes of the late 12th and early 13th centuries.[22] Popular governments also articulated a particular language of governance, premised on civic *pax* and the *bonum statum communis*, that was coupled with a substantial increase in the city's bureaucratic activity and documentary production. Innovations in administration were aimed at entrenching the authority of the popular regime, exemplified by the publication of lists that banned political opposition from government.[23] Influenced by this reconceptualization of the *populus*, Maire Vigueur initially framed the dialectic between the two groups as a cultural contest between *milites*, who represented the feudal interests of the countryside, and the *populus*, who represented the commercial and legalistic interests of the city.[24] His 2003 study on the *milites*, however, revised his conclusions to place emphasis on the urban profile of the nobility as jurists, merchants, and clerics, who dominated the politics of the commune from the 11th to the early 13th century. This was a diverse social group, though one (in contrast with the *populus*) that was also highly militarised and reliant on the spoils of war as a principal source of wealth.[25]

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[19] P. Cammarosano, "Il ricambio e l'evoluzione dei ceti dirigenti nel corso del XIII secolo", in *Magnati e popolani nell'Italia comunale, Atti del convegno, Centro Italiano di Studi di Storie e d'Arte* (Pistoia, 1997).
[20] N. Ottokar, *Il comune di Firenze alla fine del Dugento* (Torino, 1926).
[21] L. Martines, *Power and Imagination* (New York, 1979), pp. 45-46. C. Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune* (Princeton, 1991), pp. 192-211.
[22] J. Koenig, *Il 'popolo' dell'Italia del Nord nel XIII secolo* (Bologna, 1986). G. Tabacco, *The Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy: Structures of Political Rule* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 226.
[23] A. Zorzi, "The Popolo", in J. Najemy (ed.), *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 145-64. See G. Milani, *L'esclusione dal comune: conflitti e bandi politici a Bologna e in altre città italiane tra XII e XIV secolo* (Roma, 2003). For overview, see also R. Mucciarelli, *Magnati e popolano: Un conflitto nell'Italia dei Comuni (secoli XIII-XIV)* (Milano, 2009), pp. 4-13 (with bibliography).
[24] J.C. Maire Vigueur, "Il comune popolare", in *Società e istituzioni dell'Italia comunale: l'esempio di Perugia* (*Congresso storico internazionale, Perugia, 6-9 novembre 1985*, 1 (Perugia, 1988), pp. 48-55.
[25] Published originally in French. The Italian translation is J.C. Maire Vigueur, *Cavalieri e cittadini. Guerra conflitti e società nell'Italia comunale* (Bologna, 2004). On the urban *milites*, also see S. Gasparri, *I 'milites' cittadini. Studi sulla cavalleria in Italia* (Roma, 1992).

A reconceptualization of the *populus* and *milites* has in turn transformed models for describing their relationship with emergent signorie. Writing at the end of the 19th century, Ercole and Anzilotti recognised the *populus* as a crucial partner to signorial governments, which reciprocated their support by championing the faction's interests against those of the *milites*.[26] A different paradigm was offered by scholarship produced after the Second World War, still sensitive to the memory of Mussolini. Chabod and Sestan stressed that the interaction between signori and the *populus* was often violent, explaining the rise of the signorie in terms of the exploitation of factional divisions and the ruthless elimination of political opposition (an interpretation, incidentally, that functioned as much to exculpate 20th-century Italians for the despotism of the Mussolini years as it did to exonerate their 14th-century ancestors for the despotism of *signori*).[27] In the last few decades, however, the trend has been to again emphasise the compatibility of interests that linked together the signoria and factions.[28] In Milan, in particular, Somaini has observed that both the *populus* and *milites* propped up the Visconti regime at different moments from 1277 to 1302.[29] In the early Trecento, however, the signoria began to suppress factional organizations, justifying this consolidation of power in the language of monarchism and the common good. How the signoria navigated its relationship with urban factions continues to be a particularly rich vein of research (see below, the chapter on Fiamma). [30] Less work has been done on how urban factions reinvented themselves under the signoria, a topic that will be taken up in the chapter on Azario.

Equally important to the structuring of the territorial state were the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. The terms originated in Florence in the 1240s, but were not widely disseminated in Lombardy until the 1320s, when John XXII called a crusade

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[26] F. Ercole, *Dal comune al principato. Saggi sulla storia del diritto pubblico del Rinascimento* (Firenze, 1929). A. Anzilotti, "Per la storia delle signorie e del diritto pubblico italiano del rinascimento", *Studi storici*, 22 (1914).

[27] Also argument of E. Sestan, "Le origini delle signorie cittadine: un problema storico esaurito?", in *La crisi degli ordinamenti comunali e le origini dello stato del Rinascimento* (Bologna, 1979) F. Chabod, "Gli studi di storia del Rinascimento", in *Cinquant'anni di vita intellettuale italiana: 1896-1946. Scritti in onore di Benedetto Croce per il suo ottantesimo anniversario*, 2 (Napoli, 1950).

[28] For an overview and bibliography for the period, see R. Rao, *Signori di Popolo: Signoria cittadina e società comunale nell'Italia nord-occidentale, 1275-1350* (Milano, 2011), pp. 15-26.

[29] Somaini, "Processi costitutivi", pp. 681-696. On Milan's *populus* between 1302 and 1311, see Grillo, *Milano guelfa.*

[30] M. Vallerani (ed.), *Tecniche di potere nel tardo medioevo: Regimi comunali e signorie in Italia* (Roma, 2010).

to reorganise the region under Guelph signorie.[31] In the early Trecento, the Ghibelline idiom nominally signalled allegiance to the empire; the Guelph idiom, to the papacy. In practice, however, each party implied a wider network of political affiliations, with the Ghibellines looking to the leadership of the Visconti, the Scaligeri, and the Bonacolsi; and the Guelphs aligning with the Florentine oligarchy and the Angevins. By the middle of the Trecento, however, the terms had largely lost their ideological content, and were instead invoked for their convenience and their evocative forcefulness.[32]

This loss of ideological valency followed from the evolution of parties into political organisms that facilitated organisation of local administration and communication between centre and periphery. [33] Often this meant that the signoria could work with parties as political partners. In the Valtellina, where individual communities identified themselves exclusively as Guelph or Ghibellines, parties often served as the primary interlocutor of the Milanese signoria and the fundamental units of local political organisation.[34] In Cremona, three parties – the Ghibellines, Guelphs, and Maltraversi – divided among themselves control of the General Council, a political division later sanctioned by Gian Galeazzo.[35] In other contexts, however, parties could be dangerous to the authority of the territorial state, subverting principles of territoriality by maintaining interregional networks that stretched beyond the lordships of individual dynasties. Guelphs on the periphery of Visconti dominion – including in Parma, Bergamo, and Novara – could call on resources from nominally

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[31] G. Dallari, "Guelfi e ghibellini. Sguardo sull'origine e la diffusione dei due nomi in Italia e sul loro significato politico", *Rendiconti dell'Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere, Classe di Scienze Morali*, 70 (1937). R.M. Dessì, "I nomi di guelfi e ghibellini da Carlo I d'Angiò a Petrarca", in M. Gentile (ed.) *Guelfi e ghibellini nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2005), pp. 11-47. S. Raveggi, *L'Italia dei guelfi e dei ghibellini* (Milano, 2009).

[32] F. Somaini, "Il binomio imperfetto: alcune osservazioni su guelfi e ghibellini a Milano in età visconteo-sforzesca", in M. Gentile (ed.) *Guelfi e ghibellini nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2005), pp. 186-92.

[33] The literature is extensive and cannot be wholly reproduced here. For a survey of the role of parties in territorial and civic administration, see M. Dedola, "'Tener Pistoia con le parti'. Governo e società in Toscana nell'età moderna", *Ricerche Storiche*, 22 (1993); M. Gentile, *Fazioni al governo: Politica e società a Parma nel Quattrocento* (Roma, 2009); M. Gentile, "From Commune to Regional State: Political Experiments in Fourteenth Century Cremona", in J. Law and B. Paton (eds.) *Communes and Despots in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Farnham, 2010). For the role of parties in supraregional communication, see G. Tabacco, *Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy*, pp. 259-267. O. Raggio, *Faide e parentele: Lo stato genovese vista dalla Fontanabuona* (Torino, 1990), pp. 160-173. M. Gentile, *Terra e poteri: Parma e il Parmense nel ducato visconteo all'inizio del Quattrocento* (Milano, 2001), pp. 151-157.

[34] M. Della Misericordia, "*Dividersi per governarsi: fazioni, famiglie aristocratiche e comuni in Valtellina in età viscontea (1335-1447)*", *Società e storia*, 22 (1999);

[35] M. Gentile, "Political Experiments in Fourteenth Century Cremona", in B. Paton and J.E. Law (eds.), *Communes and Despots in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Farnham, 2010).

Guelph allies (Florence, especially) to support their revolts against the signoria.[36] On multiple occasions the Visconti responded to the political threat by banning the use of party idioms (that these bans had to be repeatedly decreed, however, is an indication of their ineffectiveness). The ambivalent relationship between parties and the signori continues to be an important area of research. An overlooked facet of this topic, however, has been how the political ideology of the signoria could impact on the identity and social memory of a local party, the subject of our chapter on Musso.

Our understanding of territorial bodies has also been revised in the last few decades, stimulated by the shift in perspective introduced in Chittolini's *La formazione dello stato regionale*.[37] Where the countryside was once considered a subservient backwater, Chittolini saw vibrant *quasi-città***,** micro-states, and powerful feudal federations, whose capacity for autonomous expression and political innovation could rival that of the urban centres (albeit, while not eclipsing their predominance).[38] The balance between city and contado has accordingly shifted, from Cattaneo's bourgeois paradigm that honoured the city "as the ideal principle of Italian history" to a dualistic model, which acknowledges the capacity of rural signori and communities to negotiate spheres of sovereignty.[39]

A few examples will illustrate the sheer variety of relationships that existed between centre and countryside. [40] In medieval Emilia, clans dominated castles and towns, leveraging their wealth and military resources to consolidate power into client networks, called *squadre*, that divided among themselves authority over the urban

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[36] Somaini, "Il binomio imperfetto", p. 149.
[37] G. Chittolini, *La formazione dello stato regionale*.
[38] On rural signori, see Chittolini, *Città, comunità e feudi*. On micro states, see L. Barletta, F. Cardini, G. Galasso (eds.), *Il piccolo stato: politica, storia, diplomazia (Atti del Convegno di studi, San Marino, Antico monastero di Santa Chiara, 11-13 ottobre 2001)* (San Marino, 2003). On quasi-cities, see G. Chittolini, "'Quasi città': Borghi e terre in area lombarda nel tardo medioevo", *Società e Storia*, 47 (1990). M. Folin, "Città, 'quasi città' e piccoli stati e piccoli stati nell'Italia di Antico Regime", *Storia Urbana,* 102 (2003). On small federations, see M. Della Misericordia, "Decidere e agire in comunità nel XV secolo", in A. Gamberini and G. Petralia (eds.) *Linguaggi politici nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2007). Finally, note that Chittolini himself, in the introduction of *La formazione dello stato regionale*, acknowledges the enduring primacy of the city. The observation appears in A. Gamberini, *Oltre le città: Aspetti territoriali e culture aristocratiche nella Lombardia del tardo medioevo* (Roma, 2009), p. 35.
[39] The *Grande Narrazione* of Italian history, developed out of the bourgeois idealism of the *risorgimento*, stressed the primacy of the city-state as the defining unit of Italian political life. It is a narrative that continues to inform the study of Italian history, though is not nearly as dominant as it once was. See C. Cattaneo, *Notizie sulla Lombardia; La città considerata come principio ideale delle istorie italiane*, edited by G. Armani (Milano, 1979). Also see S. de Sismondi, *Storia delle Repubbliche italiane* (Torino, 1996). For bibliography, see Gamberini, *Oltre le città,* pp. 9-13, 29-32.
[40] See also G. Chittolini, "Introduzione", in G. Chittolini (ed.) *La crisi degli ordinamenti comunali e le origini dello stato del Rinascimento* (Bologna, 1979), p. 39.

administration of Piacenza, Reggio, and Parma.[41] In the Valtellina, rural communities organized themselves under quasi-republican principles to assert their autonomy against the authoritarianism of the Visconti signoria.[42] Even in the countryside of Milan, urban centres and rural lordships enjoyed substantial autonomies, despite repeated attempts by the Visconti to discipline these territories into obedience, campaigns that had only temporary success.[43] Two *quasi-città* of the Milanese contado, Monza and Treviglio, were notable winners of the political instability of the Trecento, exchanging their dependency on the Ambrosian City for a more benign dependency on the signoria. The diverse strategies used by Monza to protect its privileges is a topic that will inform this thesis's discussion of Morigia.

Scholarship on Language

Particular rhetorical and discursive strategies often carried the potential to frame the relationships that existed between the signoria and social and territorial bodies, with historiography one of many mediums for communicating consequential discourse. Emphasis on language constitutes the other salient theme of recent scholarship on Italy, an area of research emerging from the linguistic turn of the 1970s to 1980s.[44] Two approaches have informed the study of the languages of Italian states. The Cambridge School is ultimately concerned with tracing the historical development of categories of political thought. What separates the school from the traditional study of intellectual history is its insistence that language is a *performative act* (a concept deriving from J.L. Austen) and that the intentionality of language can be determined by social context.[45] For language to be performative implies a capacity not merely to describe, but to affect the social world by generating new social meanings and categories of conceptualisation. A focus on the intentionality of language to effect change (its illocution) characterizes the work of Pocock and Skinner, the two leading representatives of the Cambridge School. By placing language within the context of its social and discursive environment, they argue, its intentionality can be determined

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[41] Gentile, *Terra e poteri*. D. Andreozzi, *Piacenza, 1402-1545: Ipotesi di ricerca* (Piacenza, 1997). A. Gamberini, *La città assediata: poteri e identità politiche a Reggio in età viscontea* (Roma, 2003).
[42] Della Misericordia, "Decidere e agire in comunità".
[43] A. Gamberini, "Il contado di Milano nel Trecento", in L.C. Mauri (ed.) *Contado e città in dialogo: Comuni urbani e comunità rurali nella Lombardia medievale* (Milano, 2003).
[44] L. Hunt, "Introduction: History, Culture, and Text", in L. Hunt (ed.), *The New Cultural History* (London, 1989).
[45] Q. Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, 1 (Cambridge, 2002), p. 103. Cf. J.L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words* (Oxford, 1975).

and its layers of meaning unfurled.[46] Pocock and Skinner have applied this methodology to rewrite the history of republicanism, tracing the articulation of its principles from Trecento Tuscany to the American Revolution.[47] It is a project that is primarily concerned with the absorption and interpretation of Roman categories of political thought – what Skinner calls *neo-Roman language*. One of Skinner's students, Peter Stacey, has recently expanded the purview of the Cambridge School to include the influence of Seneca's *De Clementia* on medieval and Renaissance languages of monarchy.[48]

The Cambridge School's attention to illocution and social contextualisation has been largely absorbed by Italian scholarship.[49] Neglected, however, has been the school's traditional fixation on *romanitas* and other broad conceptual categories.[50] Italian academics have preferred to consider the more pragmatic usage of linguistic concepts – *iustitia*, *aequitas*, *libertas* – as flexible tools for affirming or contesting the exercise of power. The preambles of signorial statutes, surrender pacts, and legal *consilia* have been deconstructed to unpick the languages that gradually (and haphazardly) articulated a theory of signorial absolutism, a process that by the end of the Trecento saw the revision of the relationship between *governanti* and *governati* as one between lord and subject.[51] So, too, court petitions, the supplications of communities, and testimonies of *rustici* have revealed a diversity of strategies for blunting the hegemony of the centre. The rhetorical strategies of communities were as diverse as the mediums they employed. Communities in the Valtellina relied on a proto-republican language to assert their autonomy.[52] Powerful clans like the Scotti carefully constructed cartulary collections to articulate a language of *pactismo* that

[46] Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, 1, pp. 103-127.
[47] J.G.A Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton, 1975). Q. Skinner, *Visions of Politics,* 2 (Cambridge, 2004).
[48] P. Stacey, *Roman Monarchy and the Renaissance Prince* (Cambridge, 2007).
[49] A. Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo* (Milano, 2005), pp. 18-25.
[50] A. Gamberini, "The Language of Politics and the Process of State-Building: Approaches and Interpretations", in A. Gamberini and I. Lazzarini (eds.) *The Italian Renaissance State* (Cambridge, 2012), p. 424.
[51] See, for instance, F. Cengarle, *Immagine di potere e prassi di governo. La politica feudale di Filippo Maria Visconti* (Roma, 2006). F. Cengarle, "Le arenghe dei decreti viscontei (1330 ca.-1447): alcune considerazione", in A. Gamberini and G. Petralia (eds.) *Linguaggi politici nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2007). I. Lazzarini "<<Cives vel subditi>>: modelli principeschi e linguaggio dei sudditi nei carteggi interni" in *Linguaggi politici*. J. Black, *Absolutism in Renaissance Milan* (Oxford, 2009). F. Cengarle, "La signoria di Azzone Visconti".
[52] Della Misericordia, "Decidere e agire".

asserted the inviolability of privileges ceded by the signoria.[53] Reggio defended its *iurisdictio* against the claims of the Estensi in part by attempting to hold signori accountable to a particular interpretation of princely clemency (defined to mean delegation of authority).[54] A common thread of this scholarship has been to locate in the individual author a greater autonomy for discursive invention and therefore social action.[55]

This thesis takes its cue from an approach that values the social context of political discourse and emphasises the variety of rhetorical strategies that could frame the legitimate exercise of power. The advantage of applying this method to historiography goes beyond the exposure of new political languages. Historiography entails the study of social memory, a particular kind of language that underpinned a unique narrative structure and "discursive grammar". The value of social memory lies in its capacity to offer groups a particularly powerful framework for interpreting events in the present. [56] In the context of the rise of the territorial state, which reorganised social and territorial bodies under a centralized political authority, narratives for the past could serve as powerful devices for reorienting a group's relationship to new political realities. The function is especially relevant to a social mentality often found in the medieval period, that is to say a mindset which revered the past as the fundamental justification for the practices and values of the present. Though by no means a *strictly* medieval mentality, this conceptualisation of the past explains the medieval period's cottage industry for forgeries and myths, readily wielded by monarchs, clans, the church, and local communities to sanction their political aspirations.[57] Histories, accordingly, were never dead letters, but were invaluable media for influencing contemporary political discussions, using 'what was' to suggest 'what should be'. How the histories of the Trecento described the past thus carried the potential to create precedents for different modes of lordship and, through origin stories, to define the value and function of particular social groups.

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[53] A. Gamberini, "Il cartulario degli Scotti di Piacenza fra memoria familiare e cultura pattista", in R. Greci and D. Romagnoli (eds.) *Uno storico e un territorio: Vito Fumagalli e l'Emilia occidentale nel Medioevo* (2005).
[54] L. Turchi, "Una piccola modifica: il linguaggio della negoziazione politica fra principe e città", in G. Badini and A. Gamberini (eds.), *Medioevo reggiano: Studi in ricordi di Odoardo Rombaldi* (Milano, 2007).
[55] A. Gamberini and G. Petralia, "Introduzione", in *Linguaggi politici*, pp. ix-xi.
[56] C. Wickham and J. Fentress, *Social Memory* (Oxford, 1992), p. 88.
[57] The argument comes from G. Spiegel, "Political Utility in Medieval Historiography", *History and Theory*, 14.3 (Oct. 1975), pp. 314-325.

Scholarship on Historiography

This political register of collective memory has been undervalued in the study of Italian historiography. Instead, attention has been directed toward identifying literary conventions and above all textual genealogy, with the aim of discovering the *patrimonio di memorie storiografiche* as an end in itself.[58] Characteristic is the work of Marino Zabbia, who has surveyed the influence of the *ars notarie* on the form and content of 14th-century notarial histories.[59] Only a few studies have also concerned themselves with the discursive strategies of historians, mainly focusing on the various ways texts participated in the debate over the temporal authority of the church. For instance, Castignoli has highlighted the anti-clerical language of Giovanni Musso's *Chronicon Placentinum*, notable for evoking the language of Marsilius of Padua and the Fraticelli.[60] Hunecke has deconstructed the hierocratic rhetoric of Fiamma's so-called *Galvagnana* and his *Chronicon Maius*.[61] Ultimately, however, the purview of each of these studies is relatively narrow.

Two notable exceptions are broad studies on Milanese historiography by Busch and Ianziti, which have engaged closely with the polemical content of Milanese texts from the 11th to the second half of the 15th century. With particular relevance to this thesis, Busch has deconstructed the popular rhetoric of the 13th-century *Chronica Danielis* (on which, more below) and exposed the monarchism of Fiamma's histories of Milan. A problem with Busch's study, however, is that it too often assumes that its texts reflect the collective memory of cities, with the effect of neglecting the particularised and better defined memories of the urban factions within.[62] Ianziti's study of Sforza historiography is, in contrast, sensitive to the fact

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[58] Quote from M. Zabbia, "Note sulla cronache universali a Firenze", in F. delle Donne and G. Pesiri (eds.), *Le scritture della storia: Pagine offerte dalla scuola nazionale di studi medievali a Massimo Miglio* (Roma, 2012), p. 140. E. Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography in the Italian Renaissance* (Chicago, 1981). On the March of Treviso and Venice, see G. Arnaldi and L. Capo, "I cronisti di Venezia e della Marca Trevigiana", in *Storia della cultura veneta: Il Trecento* (Vicenza, 1976); G. Arnaldi*, Studi sui cronisti della Marca trevigiana nell'età di Ezzelino da Romano* (Roma, 1963). On Florence, see F. Ragone*, Giovanni Villani e i suoi continuatori: la scrittura delle cronache a Firenze nel Trecento* (Roma, 1998). L. Morreale, "French Literature, FLorentine Politics, and Vernacular Historical Writing, 1270-1348", *Speculum*, 85/4 (2010). Chapter introductions below include fuller bibliography.

[59] M. Zabbia, *I notai e la cronachistica cittadina italiana nel Trecento* (Roma, 1999).

[60] P. Castignoli, "Il pensiero politico del cronista Giovanni Musso e la sua invettiva contro il potere temporale della chiesa all'epoca del grande scisma d'occidente", *BSP*, 90 (1995).

[61] V. Hunecke, "Die kirchenpolitischen Exkurse in den Chroniken des Galvaneus Flamma", *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 25 (1969).

[62] J. Busch, *Die Mailänder Geschichtsschreibung* (Munich, 1997).

that its texts channel the ideology of restricted social circles – namely, the Sforza court and Italy's humanist intelligentsia.[63] The function of Sforza history-writing, Ianziti explains, was to legitimate the *parvenu* Sforza dynasty, a project made all the more necessary given the illegitimacy of Francesco Sforza's aggressive seizure of power and his failure to obtain recognition from the empire. Ianziti observes that this project entailed the wilful distortion of the recent memory of the regime's *res gestae* to influence the attitudes of a wide public audience, a methodology that categorises this history-writing as an early form of propaganda (notwithstanding that it was not mass-produced).[64]

Ianziti's research is a particularly rich example of the performative functionality of history. Court propaganda, however, is something rather different from the histories of the Trecento, for reasons that underscore the unique features of that period's historiography. As observed by James Grubb, Trecento texts are not products of the court. Indeed, they are often critical of the centre (though hardly ever in a way that questions its right to rule).[65] The localism of these histories is testified to by Pietro Azario's C*hronicon de Gestis Principum Vicecomitum*, whose title would seem to promise an account of the Visconti's *res gestae*. Instead, the text largely neglects the goings-on of the Visconti court to focus on peripheral affairs – such as Bussolari's rebellion in Pavia and the behaviour of podestà in Novara (all important topics, no doubt, but beyond what the reader was promised). Perhaps the closest that any Trecento history comes to court propaganda are the histories of Galvano Fiamma. The Milanese friar enjoyed a close relationship with several of the Visconti and clearly wrote with the purpose of justifying the emergent monarchism of the signoria. His histories, however, do not seem to have been sanctioned by the court, and though they legitimate Visconti power, they are certainly not propaganda even in Ianziti's sense of the word, which entails a conscious desire to distort facts in order to shape the political attitudes of a public. Fiamma's histories do manipulate their source material, but one senses that this was not with the intention of duping its readership into supporting the regime. Fiamma's histories, as well as the other texts of this thesis,

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[63] G. Ianziti, *Humanistic Historiography under the Sforzas: Politics and Propaganda in Fifteenth-Century Milan* (Oxford, 1988).
[64] Ianziti, *Humanistic Historiography*, p. 14. Also see P. Cammarosano (ed.) *Le forme della propaganda politica nel Due e nel Trecento* (Roma, 1994).
[65] J. Grubb, "Corte e cronache: il principe e il pubblico", in G. Chittolini, A. Molho, and P. Schiera (eds.) *Origini dello Stato: Processi di formazione statale in Italia fra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna, 1994).

are at most instruments of negotiation, attempting to reconcile the memories that underpinned the identities of certain social and territories bodies with the new realities engendered by the rise of the territorial state. The primary agenda of our historians is not *persuasion* but, rather, *adaptation*. They are servicing the needs of localities, aiming merely to preserve a local group's sense of privilege and identity.

There are a few models for interpreting the language of this kind of historiography. One is Busch's deconstruction of the *Chronica Danielis*, a mid 13th-century text notable for imagining a family of counts onto Milan's deep past, whose authoritarian regime anticipates the contemporary lordship of the Torriani signoria. The text places this signorial archetype within a narrative structure that privileges the experience of Milan's *populus*, evoking the faction's memory of persecution by the aristocracy, while representing the counts as defenders of the *populus* faction.[66] In so doing, the *Chronica Danielis* interweaves a popular factional memory with the proto-monarchism of the reigning signoria, creating a shared history that aligns the values of the *populus* with the Torriani. In our chapter on Fiamma, we will argue that the *Manipulus Florum* performs a similar feat, functioning to adapt the collective memory of Milan's *populus* to the monarchical ambitions of the Visconti signoria.

Another important model is Gabrielle Spiegel's study of the prose histories produced by French-speaking aristocrats of Flanders. Written in the aftermath of Philip Augustus's victory over the count of Flanders, these prose histories romanticised the values and mythology of Flemish aristocratic lineages, affirming the prerogatives of the nobility against the threat to their privileged status posed by the French court. Uniquely, the texts employed the prose vernacular, with the intention of subverting the authority of the poetic historiography of the centre.[67] Though the histories of this thesis are often less inventive in their style of discourse, they similarly attempt to assert the privileges of groups whose autonomy was threatened by the authoritarian dominance of the court. As in Flanders, history was valued in the Visconti territorial state for its ability to protect collective identity and social status.

This thesis will apply the methodologies of Busch and Spiegel to the Trecento histories of Milan, Monza, Novara, and Piacenza, while bearing in mind the wider linguistic views of the Cambridge school and its critics. There are two caveats. First,

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[66] Busch, *Die Mailander Geschichtsschreibung*, pp. 148-78.
[67] G. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1993).

this is not a comprehensive study of Visconti historiography. Other Trecento histories of the territorial state, like the *Chronicon Bergomense Guelpho-Ghibellinum*, Alberto Bezano's *Chronica pontificum et imperatorum*, and the Dominican histories of Galvano Fiamma, among others, have been ignored. This is a consequence of an attempt to value depth over breadth, given that every history requires ample discussion to properly deconstruct. For similar reason of economy, this thesis will be focused on illocution at the expense of perlocution (i.e., reader-response – how an audience interprets a text or is affected by it). Given these deficits, what is offered herein is merely a foray into the historical thought of the Visconti Trecento, which – despite all its limitations – should nevertheless reap some rewards.

The Histories

The thesis is divided into four main chapters, each focusing on the histories of a particular author.[68] We begin with **Galvano Fiamma**, a friar and courtier of the Visconti. The most prolific of this thesis's historians, Fiamma wrote nine histories on political and Dominican topics. The chapter on Fiamma will focus on four of his texts: three are broad historical narratives of Milan – the *Manipulus Florum*, the so-called *Galvagnana*, and the *Chronicon Maius*; the fourth is the *Opusculum*, a condensed history covering events from 1328 to 1343.[69] With the exception of the *Opusculum* (composed in 1343), Fiamma's histories were written in the 1330s, during the reign of Azzone Visconti, when the regime was abandoning the pretence of ruling within communal law to assume the trappings of a monarchy. Fiamma's histories can be understood as a contribution to this programme. His first three histories populate Milan's early past with kings, counts, viscounts, and dukes, offering a typological precedent for the monarchical lordship of the signoria. Indeed, in the *Chronicon Maius*, a genealogical tree even identifies the Visconti as the descendants of Count Anglus Anglerie, the noble son of the Trojan prince Aeneas. Evidence of royal lineage is given explicit meaning in the *Opusculum*, which declares that the virtuous Visconti, though technically *capitanei*, were very nearly *reges*.[70]

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[68] A bibliography for each historian can be found at the beginning of their respective chapter.
[69] See abbreviations page for Fiamma bibliography. The *Galvagnana* as a textual construct is problematised on page 34.
[70] *Opusculum*, p. 36.

But the genius of Fiamma's programme lies in its integration of this monarchical language with the collective memories of Milan's factions. The *Manipulus Florum* offers a popular narrative, focusing on the persecution of the *populus* by a series of laws promulgated by the nobility, the statutes *in odium populi*. Relief from oppression comes from a series of archetypal monarchical figures, ranging from Milan's regime of ancient dukes to the Visconti, whose legitimacy derives from their protection of the *populus*. The *Galvagnana* rewrites the city's history to favour the perspective of the urban aristocracy, with the chronicle mainly functioning to validate the faction's control over Milan's Cathedral Chapter (an ancient prerogative of the nobility) by drawing attention to the nobility's intimate relationship with the city's archbishops, from Saint Ambrose to Ottone Visconti. The *Chronicon Maius* is sensitive to the experience of Milan's merchants, whose interests are tied to the commercialism of the signoria. The *Opusculum*, by contrast, is the only text that attempts to provide a neutral narrative, emphasising the shared fidelity of Milan's factions to the benevolent and magnanimous Visconti – appealing to the political sentiments of a civically minded public. Altogether, Fiamma's histories are testaments to the enduring relevance of factionalism to the creation of political legitimacy, with each text functioning to reconcile the social mindset of a faction to the authoritarian rule of the Visconti lords.

As we leave Milan for its contado, we can appreciate another advocate for the regime in **Bonincontro Morigia**, a well-born Ghibelline from the *quasi-città* Monza. Morigia's *Chronicon Modoetiense* was written during the reign of Giovanni Visconti.[71] It covers events from Julius Caesar to the repatriation of Monza's stolen treasury in 1344, but its primary focus is on the war fought between the Visconti and the Guelphs in the 1320s and early 1330s. Morigia uniquely imposes onto the narrative the thematic and rhetorical constructs of the first and second book of Maccabees, the story of the Jewish uprising against Seleucid rule. The Lombards are refashioned as God's chosen people; John XXII's legate is the Seleucid king Antiochus IV; and Monza is Jerusalem. Just as the books of Maccabees had concealed divisions between traditional and Hellenized Jews to frame the Maccabean war as primarily a struggle for independence, Morigia's narrative creates a false sense of Lombard unity by representing the conflict with the Guelphs as primarily a war

[71] Bonincontro Morigia, *Chronicon Modoetiense*, *RIS*, 12 (Milan, 1728).

between Lombards and the foreign mercenaries of the pope. The rhetoric is pseudo-patriotic, defending the autonomy of a loosely defined *Lombardia*. Within this pseudo-nationalist construct, however, the text affords Monza a political and religious exceptionalism, rooting this privileged identity in the *quasi-città*'s possession of the Basilica of Saint John, rendered as an Italian Temple of Solomon.

Morigia's *Chronicon* is also notable for a theory of absolutism. "The prince is the foundation of the people", Morigia says. "He is the father of his country. All others ought to be ruled and governed by his justice."[72] Morigia's prince alone has *liberum arbitrium,* allowing him to augment the *res publica* (his preferred term for the state) with *iustitia*, "to calm the body and save the soul."[73] This is rhetoric that combines monarchical and communitarian languages from patristic, Italian, and Roman sources. In particular there are parallels between Morigia's conception of absolutism and that of Seneca's *De Clementia.* The inclusion of this rhetoric speaks to the receptiveness of *quasi-città* to the absolutism of the signoria. The assimilation of this ideology is arguably sensible, given the signoria's role in protecting the privileges of rural localities against the claims of the city (a protection that Monza benefited from).

Pietro Azario, an historian from Novara, represents a less compromising attitude toward the monarchical politics of the centre. A talented notary, Azario witnessed first hand the violence engendered by Visconti policy while serving as an army bureaucrat during Galeazzo Visconti's campaign to recapture a rebellious Bologna. His *Chronicon de Gestis Principum Vicecomitum* is a contemporary account of this war and other events in the western half of the Visconti territorial state up to 1364, with a focus on the local politics of Novara and, to a lesser extent, Pavia. For the most part, the *Chronicon* is subtle in expressing its hostility toward the Visconti, whose regime is conflated with Novara's foreign and ineffectual podestà. “During the regime of consuls”, Azario explains, “our city always acquired.”[74] During the podestaria, however, “the city always declined”.[75] As an alternative to the consolidation of signorial power, Azario upholds the ideal of the *popularis status*, a

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[72] BM, p. 1165: *Princeps est fundamentum populi...est pater patriae, ab eo debent regi omnia alia iustitia et gubernari*.
[73] BM, p. 1090: *Retinere autem liberum arbitrium, est salva iustitia conservare, adiuvare, et augere rempublicam; et haec virtus est quaedam Iustitiae, quae omnia bona temporalia conservat, et quietat etiam corpus, et animam salvat.*
[74] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 362. *Durantibus autem Consulibus, semper nostra Civitas acquisivit.*
[75] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 362. *Regnantibus vero Potestaribus semper declinavit.*

political community expressive of the values of the urban *populus*. Azario applies the terminology to regimes in Pavia, Genoa, the rural Canavese (in modern Piedmont), and Novara, whose very origins are identified with the efforts of the *popularis status* to create an urban refuge against the violence of the rural nobility. Like Fiamma's *Manipulus Florum*, Azario's *Chronicon* is fundamentally reflective of a popular social memory.

For Azario, the recent plight of the *popularis status* is a morality tale. In his much shorter work on the Canavese, the *Opusculum de Bello Canapiciiano*, he laments the "yoke of perpetual servitude" of the princes of Savoy and the marquis of Montferrat, which subjugated the popular communities of the region to their dominion, and opines that this would have been avoided had the Canavese's inhabitants overcome their internal divisions to present a unified front.[76] In the *Chronicon*, Azario faults Novara, too, for its internal discord, while admiring in Pavia the ability of the priest Bussolaro to unify the city's *populus* to resist the aggressions of Galeazzo II. The pseudo-republican language of Azario's texts is nevertheless tempered by a political realism. Rather than categorically reject the legitimacy of the Visconti territorial state, the *Chronicon* attempts to limit its mandate by holding it accountable to a system of values that equate good governance with low taxation and populism. Somewhat ironically, the authoritarian Bernabò is raised as a model of benign lordship, specifically praised for improving the plight of a *rusticus* who had suffered at the hands of his oppressive lord. Azario is this thesis's only notary author, as well as the only writer critical of signorial monarchism.

The thesis closes with **Giovanni Musso**'s *Chronicon Placentinum*.[77] Written between 1386 and 1402, the *Chronicon* is a "Ghibelline" history, channelling the imperial ideology and anti-clerical language used by the Ghibelline party in the early Trecento, a language shaped by the polemics of radical Franciscans, Dante's *Monarchia*, and Marsilius of Padua's *Defensor Pacis*, among other sources. The Ghibellinism of the *Chronicon* is a response to the Visconti's conflict in the 1370s with Gregory XI, whose apparent pretensions to temporal lordship in central and northern Italy had superficial similarities to John XXII's ambitions in Lombardy at the beginning of the century. The similarities engendered a familiar debate over papal

[76] P. Azario, *Opusculum de Bello Canepiciano*, *RIS*, 16 (Milano, 1730), p. 197. *Unde propter guerram et morbum subsecutum, ubi liberi et potentes erant, nunc pauperes effecti sunt et submissi iugo perpetue servitutis.*
[77] Johanne de Musis*, Chronicon Piacentinum*, *RIS*, 16 (Milan: Societa Palatinà, 1730).

hierocracy and clerical poverty. Sympathetic to the church was Pietro da Ripalta, a citizen of Piacenza and the author of the *Chronica Placentina*, a philo-clerical history of Piacenza.[78] Musso's *Chronicon* is a revision of this text, adapted to justify Visconti lordship and to stigmatise the church as the author of a millennium of violence.

But the real genius of Musso's history lies in its account of the Duecento and early Trecento, when power in Piacenza was contested by several aristocratic clans from the countryside. Musso deviates from Ripalta to impose onto the narrative the political categories found in the *Annales Gibellini* (a 13th-century civic chronicle) to represent urban conflict as a competition between the *pars Imperatoris and pars Ecclesiae* (Ripalta, instead, represented events as a struggle between the *populus* and *milites*). Effectively, Musso is projecting the political conflict with Gregory XI onto the long narrative of Piacenza's history, imagined as a centuries-long contest between the empire and church. Musso aligns the *pars Imperatoris* with the legitimate interests of Piacenza's *populus* and the Visconti, while the *pars Ecclesiae* is represented as the source of urban conflict – further proof of Musso's charge that the church was an author of violence. These categories, significantly, are also used to arbitrate the legitimacy of the various clans in the city, with the *Chronicon* aggrandising the lordship of the Landi, Pallavicini, and Fontanesi as supporters of the *pars Imperatoris*, while vilifying the Pallastrelli and the Scotti as supporters of the *pars Ecclesiae*. The history is a rare example of the articulation and projection of the signoria's Ghibellinism onto the local memory of the periphery.

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The diversity of textual languages was a product of a state that was itself socially and politically diverse. We hope in this thesis to expose some of the variety of ways this diversity was expressed, as well as the important role of historiography as a medium for communicating identity and power. The result should be a deeper understanding of the territorial state and the political communities from which it was formed.

[78] Pietro da Ripalta, *Chronica placentina nella trascrizione di Iacobo Mori*, edited by Maria Fillia and Claudia Binello (Piacenza, 1995).

Chapter 1: The Factional Histories of Galvano Fiamma

"If I were to weave a wicker basket or tie together palm leaves, no one would criticise it; no one would disparage it", Galvano Fiamma despairs. "Now, however, because I inquire into the ancient origin of the illustrious city of Milan, its triumphant victories, and its noble deeds more diligently than all my contemporaries, my labour is rewarded with dog bites..."[1]

So begins the prologue of Fiamma's first history of Milan, the *Manipulus Florum*. The hyperbole becomes more pronounced, as Fiamma compares himself to the likes of Saint Ambrose, Gregory, and Augustine, before imploring his critics, "whose lips are lined with dog's teeth", to restrain their disapproval.[2] Just what criticism Fiamma was anticipating is only hinted at. It is not until we read the prologue of Fiamma's so-called *Galvagnana* that we find specific complaints, in which the author bemoans that he should be called a "forger" (*falsarius*) and a "compiler of fables" (*fabularum compilator*).[3] While all this might lead us to feel sympathy for Fiamma, anyone today familiar with his writings would be forgiven if he took the side of the dogs. That Fiamma was a *fabularum compilator* is precisely the criticism levied by the 19th-century historian Francesco Novati, who wrote that Fiamma was a "negligent writer, credulous, and deprived of critical sense", a reaction to his fanciful narrative of Milan's illustrious beginnings and for the inaccuracies in his account of Barbarossa's and Frederick II's Italian campaigns.[4] Novati might have done well to add that Fiamma was also frequently inconsistent. Fiamma rewrote more than he wrote, producing six histories with overlapping narratives. His three chronicles covering the history of Milan from antiquity to the present – the *Manipulus Florum*, *Galvagnana* and *Chronicon Maius* – are particularly conspicuous for their contrasting interpretations of the same events, with the differences between the

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[1] Galvano Fiamma, "Galvanei Flammae Manipulus florum sive historia Mediolanensis ab origine urbis ad a. circiter 1336", in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 11 (Milano, 1727), p. 537: *Si autem fiscellam iunco texerem, aut palmarum folia complicarem, nullus morderet, nullus detraheret. Nunc autem quia huius illustris Urbis Mediolanensis longum exordium, eiusque triumphales victorias, ac ingenua gesta super omnes coaetaneos meos diligentius inquiro, morsibus caninis remuneratur labor...*

[2] MF, p. 538: *Numquid lux Mundi Doctor Ambrosius haeresum insertione, dictis obnubilatur? Numquid lingua Christi Gregorius ignium voragini in suis Libris condemnatur? Numquid scribanice Augustinus numerosa Librorum traditione fabularum compilator acclamatur? Numquid Coelorum vox Hieronymus in sua Hebraica veritate falsidicus appellator? Certe reor, quod nec mihi veniam dabitis filii hominum, quorum dentes sunt arma et sagittae, et lingua gladius acutus. Discant ergo obtrectatores mei, quorum labia caninis dentibus sunt vallata, prius legere hanc Chronicam, quam detrahere.*

[3] Milano: Biblioteca Ambrosiana MS A 329 inf, *Galvagnana*, p. 12.

[4] F. Novati, "Bonvicini de Rippa, De magnalibus urbis Mediolani. Testo inedito del 1288 ricavato da un codice madrileno", *BISI*, 20 (1898), p. 36: *compilatore negligente, credulo, privo di senso critico*.

Manipulus Florum and the other two texts especially glaring (a point that will be addressed further on).[5] The problem of contradiction is not isolated to narratives between texts. On the question of the origin of Milan's *società della Motta*, for example, the *Chronicon Maius* offers two conflicting accounts.[6]

For the modern academic, equally off-putting is the sheer weight of Fiamma's literary output. Previously mentioned are the *Manipulus Florum* (probably composed in 1337), the so-called *Galvagnana* (composed about 1338), the *Chronicon Maius* (perhaps 1339), and the *Opusculum* (1342).[7] We have qualified our references to the *Galvagnana* because the editions of the text contain significant narrative variations, so could arguably be classified as not one but several distinct histories.[8] (In this chapter, the title *Galvagnana* will refer only to the Ambrosiana version of the text.) Then there are also the *Politia Novella* (about 1342), a pre-history of Milan up to the *initium aetatis christi*, the *Chronica pontificium Mediolanensium* (1339), and the *Chronicon Extravagans* (about 1339), a collection of encyclopaedic entries on Milanese history, politics, and economy. Finally, we mention Fiamma's two local histories of the Dominican order, the *Parva* (1333) and the *Maior* (1344), as well as a lost chronicle on emperors and a couple of treatises on philosophical and religious questions. Each text has its own unique set of historical points of reference, only adding to the frustrations arising from attempts to extract from Fiamma a coherent, consistent, and reliable historical narrative. The tangled web of repetition, contradiction, and fabrication, contained within a literary corpus much too lengthy for any single reader to easily master, makes Fiamma – all hyperbole aside – the most difficult and frustrating writer of the Italian Trecento.

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[5] Narrative differences between the texts have been noticed from at least the beginning of the 20th century. See G. Cossa, "Cronaca Galvagnana", *ASL*, 6 (1879), pp 836-7. P. Torelli, "La cronaca milanese Flos Florum", *Archivio Muratoriano*, 1 (1904-13), p. 115. P. Tomea, *Tradizione apostolica e coscienza cittadina a Milano nel medioevo: La leggenda di san Barnaba* (Milan, 1993), pp. 112-127.

[6] See below, pp. 73-74.

[7] The edited edition of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana's *Chronicon Maius and Chronicon Extravagans* is abridged. Where the edited edition is incomplete, this chapter will cite from the original manuscript. For the (edited) *Chronicon Maius*, see Galvano Fiamma, "Chronicon Maius", in A. Ceruti (ed.) *Chronicon extravagans et Chronicon Maius auctore Galvano Flamma*, *Miscellanea Storica Italiana*, 7 (1869). Henceforth, CM. The manuscript citation is Milano: Biblioteca Ambrosiana MS A 275 inf, *Chronicon Maius*. Henceforth, CM A275. For the (edited) *Chronicon Extravagans*, see Galvano Fiamma, "Chronicon Extravagans", in A. Ceruti (ed.) *Chronicon extravagans et Chronicon Maius auctore Galvano Flamma*, *Miscellanea Storica Italiana*, 7 (1869). Henceforth, CE. The manuscript citation is Milano: Biblioteca Ambrosiana MS A 275 inf, *Chronicon Extravagans*. Henceforth CE A275.

[8] This is an argument made in S.A. Cengarle and M. David, *La cronaca Estravagante di Galvano Fiamma* (Milano, 2013).

Nevertheless, it would be foolish to discount Fiamma, a deeply learned and well-connected operator. Born in 1283 to a family of affluent notaries, he entered the Dominican monastery of San Eustorgio, by special dispensation, just before the age of 15.[9] He became the monastery's first teacher of moral philosophy, lecturing young monks principally on Aristotle. He left Milan around 1323, forced to evacuate because of the interdict placed on the city by the cardinal legate Bertrand du Poujet, and may have settled in Genoa and then certainly in Bologna, where he at one time served as a witness in an inquisitorial process against the followers of the would-be emperor Louis of Bavaria.[10] He returned to his native city around 1333 and played a leading role in reconciling the Visconti with his fellow Dominicans, whose earlier support for the pope had estranged them from the signoria. His relationship with the Visconti intensified, as he became an intimate of Azzone, a confessor for Luchino and his son, and a scribe and chaplain for Giovanni. Though Fiamma wrote his histories of Milan as a private citizen, his relationship with the Visconti thoroughly influenced their composition. They are patriotic and highly partisan texts, which served both to aggrandise Milan and the signoria. We will argue that the narrative contradictions of Fiamma's texts reflect an attempt to accommodate the memories of diverse and difficult readerships. Indeed, the prologues of Fiamma's histories, rather than exposing the author's insecurities, are arguably revealing of the monk's sensitivity to the weighty expectations and attitudes of different communities of readers, whose own social memories would have mirrored the complicated structures of Fiamma's own texts.[11] The variations between his texts will constitute a central theme of this chapter.

This brings up the larger question of textual functionality. What are the political languages contained in the texts and to what purposes were they employed? There has been a rich tradition of secondary literature on Fiamma over the last 150 years, though seldom has it inquired into Fiamma's intentions. Late 19th- and early 20th-century academics in Italy were more interested in identifying Fiamma's sources

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[9] The best modern biography of Fiamma, replete with an excellent bibliography, comes from P. Tomea, *Fiamma (Flamma, de Flama), Galvano*, in *DBI*, 47 (1997). Also useful, though with some inaccuracies, is G. Odetto, "La Cronaca maggiore dell'Ordine domenicano di Galvano Fiamma", *Archivum fatrum praedicatorum*, 10 (1940), pp. 298-302.

[10] F. Bock, "Studien zum politischen Inquisitionsprozess Johannes XXII.", *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 26 (1935-36), p. 71.

[11] On social memory in the middle ages, see J. Fentress and C. Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 144-172.

and in ascertaining ideological influences.[12] The inherent functionality of Fiamma's histories was ignored, with Fiamma dismissed by academics like Novati as an untrustworthy raconteur. By the mid 20th century, Fiamma was primarily read as a source for the Visconti period, where the narrative of his texts is more reliable. The outline of events that appears in *Storia di Milano*, which in turn has a weighty presence in Marco Fossati and Alessandro Ceresatto's more recent narrative for the early Visconti period, is indebted to Fiamma.[13] Vallerani's observations on the social composition of Visconti Milan is highly reliant on the friar's writings.[14] More focused studies, including Cengarle's insights on the administration of Azzone, carefully mine Fiamma's texts for descriptions of ritual and episodes of rebellion.[15] In the Italian academic tradition, only Paolo Tomea and Piero Majocchi have closely engaged with the question of illocution. Tomea's interests, however, are limited to how the *Manipulus Florum* makes a case for the primacy of the Ambrosian church, which is alleged to be the most ancient diocese in Europe and Africa.[16] By contrast, Majocchi focuses on Fiamma's aggrandisement of Milan as a monarchical capital, which the friar affiliates with emperors, kings, and imperial coronations (an argument that, unfortunately, does not rely on Jörg Busch's earlier and superior study).[17] Somewhat surprisingly, although Tomea's own work has emphasised narrative differences between Fiamma's texts, Tomea has concluded that, with some notable exceptions from the *Manipulus Florum*, "despite the number of works which compose Fiamma's historiography, [the narratives] are substantially similar".[18] It is a judgement that has

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[12] C. Cantù "Vari punti della storia della Lombardia", *ASI*, 13 (1871). L. Grazioli, "Di alcune fonti storiche citate e usate da fra Galvano Fiamma", *Rivista di Scienze Storiche*, 4 (1907), pp. 13-14, 118-154, 261-269, 355-69, 450-63. L. Grazioli, "La Cronaca di Goffredo da Bussero", *ASL*, 33 (1906), pp. 219-221. L.A. Ferrai, "Le cronache di Galvano Fiamma e le fonti della Galvagnana" *BISI*, 10 (1891), pp. 110-116. Much later, there is even A. Caretta, "Le fonti lodigiane di Galvano Fiamma", *Archivio storico lodigiano*, 10 (1962), pp. 3-19.

[13] F. Cognasso, "L'Unificazione della Lombardia sotto Milano" in *Storia di Milano*, 5 (Milano, 1955). M. Fossati and A Ceresatto, "La Lombardia alla ricerca d'uno Stato", in G. Andenna (ed.) *Comuni e signorie nell'Italia settentrionale: la Lombardia* (Torino, 1998).

[14] M. Vallerani, "L'affermazione del sistema podestarile e le trasformazione degli assetti istituzionali" G. Andenna (ed.) *Comuni e signorie nell'Italia settentionale: la Lombardia* (Torino, 1998), pp. 394-6.

[15] F. Cengarle, "La signoria di Azzone Visconti tra prassi, retorica e iconografia (1329-1339)", in M. Vallerani (ed.) *Tecniche di potere nel tardo medioevo* (Rome, 2010).

[16] Tomea, *Tradizione apostolica*, pp. 112-127. MF, p. 445: *Ex quo patet, quod Ecclesia Mediolani Romanam antiquitate praecessit, et per consequens omnes Europae, vel Africae Ecclesias quovis titulo nominatas.*

[17] P. Majocchi, *Pavia città regia: Storia e memoria di una capitale medievale* (Rome, 2008), pp. 166-79. Majocchi also lists "antagonismo con Pavia" as one of the narrative nuclei of the texts. Though the texts are unsympathetic to Pavia, it is unclear why this should be considered a core theme.

[18] Tomea, "Fiamma (Flamma, de Flama), Galvano": *malgrado il numero delle opere che lo compongono, è sostanzialmente monocorde.*

gone largely unchallenged, and is perhaps one reason why the differences of functionality between Fiamma's texts have received so little attention.

Outside Italy, Louis Green has deconstructed some of the language of the *Opusculum*, revealing its use of an Aristotelian vocabulary to articulate a theory of signorial magnificence.[19] The study, however, has a limited scope, based on just a few excerpted passages from the *Opusculum*. The few dedicated and substantial works on the functionality of Fiamma's histories have been in German.[20] There are two studies worth mentioning. The first is Volker Hunecke's on the ecclesiastical politics of Fiamma's texts, in which he argues that one function of his histories was to defend a concept of papal *plenitudo potestatis* and to argue for the papacy's ultimate sovereignty over the empire. The other study is Jörg Busch's *Die Mailänder Geschichtsschreibung*, which argues that Fiamma's histories provide a conceptualisation of signorial government that anchors it in the traditions of the commune, representing it as a legitimate continuation of customary political practice. The Visconti themselves are linked by Fiamma to an ancient ruling family called the counts of Angleria, who allegedly ruled Milan from antiquity up to Barbarossa's conquest of the city. [21]

Both Hunecke and Busch are broadly correct in their observations, though their tendency to generalise across Fiamma's histories undermines their conclusions. This is particularly noticeable in Hunecke, who assumes that the *Manipulus Florum* makes the same argument for papal supremacy as the *Chronicon Maius* and *Galvagnana*, when in fact the *Manipulus Florum* is more supportive of the empire's rights over the papacy.[22] (Probably this is because the text was written before the Visconti's rapprochement with Avignon, when the legitimacy of the signoria was still dependent on the vicariate of Louis of Bavaria). Busch, by contrast, is more sensitive to the differences between Fiamma's texts, acknowledging that the later the

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[19] L. Green, "Galvano Fiamma, Azzone Visconti and the Revival of the Classical Theory of Magnifience", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes,* 53 (1990).
[20] V. Hunecke, "Die kirchenpolitischen Exkurse in den Chroniken des Galvaneus Flamma" *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 25 (1969). B.S. Tateo, "Die Zitierung kommunaler Register in den Chroniken des Galvaneo Fiamma" in H. Keller and T. Behrmann (eds.) *Kommunales Schriftgut in Oberitalien: Formen, Funktionene, Überlieferung* (Munich, 1995). J. Busch, *Die Mailänder Geschichtsschreibung* (Munich, 1997).
[21] Busch, *Die Mailänder Geschichtsschreibung*, pp. 225-232.
[22] This chapter does not deal with Fiamma's imperial ideology and theology. But for those who are interested in this theme, it is worth starting with these chapters from the *Manipulus Florum*: cxxix (suggests that papal coronations of emperors were not legally necessary but only done *per modum gratificationis et amicitiae*) and cxxxii (recognizes an emperor's right to depose a pope and confirm papal elections).

publication date, the more detailed their genealogy for the Visconti. His implicit assumption, however, that the texts otherwise are narratively consistent is incorrect. Still, Busch's insight that Fiamma's texts functioned to legitimate the monarchism of the signoria will constitute the starting point of this chapter's analysis of the texts.

Expanding on Busch's thesis, we will make two points about Fiamma's textual intentions. The less controversial is to demonstrate that Fiamma's early histories of Milan functioned to justify the Visconti's right to rule by representing them as heirs of Milan's ancient kings, dukes, and counts. The second argument, and this will constitute the majority of this chapter's analysis, posits that the differences between Fiamma's histories are the consequence of a difference in targeted audience. Fiamma's problem was that the reality of urban politics meant that there was no singularly acceptable conception of the *civitas* that the Visconti could claim as their inheritance. The city, even under the signoria, was never a politically homogenous unit. It was a shared space made up of factions with diverse political aims, institutional traditions, and conceptions of the state – often irreconcilable.[23] Fiamma himself, when recalling Milan's two most prominent factions, the *populus* and the nobles, despairs that conflict between them rendered Milan not one but *duae civitates*.[24] In order to make his histories acceptable to different audiences, Fiamma crafts each chronicle to draw on a particular faction's conceptualisation of the state. We will argue that the *Manipulus Florum* was targeted toward Milan's *populares*; the *Galvagnana*, toward the nobles; and the *Chronicon Maius* and *Opusculum*, toward an urban elite composed of wealthy merchants, jurists, and notaries who identified more closely with a communitarian ideal of the city than with any particular faction.

For our purposes, this makes Fiamma an invaluable source for understanding different strategies for representing sovereignty in the mid Trecento. This chapter will focus on the *Manipulus Florum*, the *Galvagnana*, the *Chronicon Maius*, and the *Opusculum* – these being the texts that constituted Fiamma's main narratives of Milanese history. Occasional reference will be made to the *Politia Novella* and *Chronica Extravagans*. The texts will be deconstructed to demonstrate how their

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[23] We will return to this point later in the chapter. For a general overview, see M. Gentile, "Factions and parties: problems and perspectives", in A. Gamberini and I. Lazzarini (eds.) *The Italian Renaissance State* (Cambridge, 2012). A. Black, *Guilds and Civil Society in European Political Thought from the Twelfth Century to the Present* (London, 1984), p. 27. J. Watts, *The Making of Polities* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 34-43. R. Davies, "The Medieval State: The Tyranny of a Concept?", *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 16 (2003), pp. 280-99.
[24] CM, p. 752.

rhetoric and narrative structures created antecedents for signorial government while reconciling the signoria with factional conceptions of the state. As we will come to appreciate, though Fiamma's texts contain a mixture of memories, they shared a function to enhance signorial power and to justify the emergence of a more monarchic form of lordship.

Antecedents to the Signori

It is perhaps best to begin with the beginning of each of Fiamma's texts, emphasising both similarities and differences. The period covering the founding of Milan to about the 11th century was one remote enough in urban memory to be susceptible to a significant degree of literary invention. And like many medieval historians, Fiamma tended to romanticise the early past, regarding it as a sort of golden age whose institutions and customs were representative of what ought to be the political and moral behaviour of the present.[25] Therefore, to write about antiquity entailed much more than revealing the links that bound together past and present, a typical objective of most histories. In order to render the past a mirror for what the present ought to be, historical narratives were superimposed with archetypes functioning as retro-projections of idealised institutions and political actors.[26] Sometimes the space between the archetype and its present referent was merely nominal. Milan's ancient tribune, as described by Fiamma, is no different from the credenza of the 13th and 14th centuries, whose function was to protect the *populus* from the *molestiae* of the nobles (*nobelium molestiae*).[27]

Fiamma could also use his archetypes in more provocative ways. Before Milan had an archbishop, Fiamma explains that it had an *archiflamen*, a kind of high priest, who was second only to Rome's and presided over "all the cities, which are in the five provinces of Italy".[28] This was a convenient past on which to make a case for the archbishop of Milan's position at the top of Italy's ecclesiastical hierarchy (the

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[25] R. Bordone, *Uno stato d'animo: Memoria del tempo e comportamenti urbani nel mondo comunale italiano* (Florence, 2002) [accessible online at http://www.rm.unina.it/rmebook/dwnld/Bordone%20acrobat%20reader.pdf], pp. 36-57.
[26] G.M. Spiegel, "Political Utility in Medieval Historiography: A Sketch", in *History and Theory,* 14.3 (1975).
[27] GA, p. 70.
[28] MF, p. 553: *Et subicientes omnes Civitates, quae sunt in quinque Provinciis Italiae...* See also GA, p. 40. Though *flamen* was an office in ancient Rome, there was no *archiflamen.* The title is Fiamma's creation. See C.E. Beneŝ, *Urban Legends: Civic Identity and the Classical Past in Northern Italy, 1250-1350* (Pennsylvania University Park, 2011), p. 33.

pope excepted), which was vigorously contested by the archbishops of Ravenna and Aquileia.[29] We can appreciate the extent to which this project would have involved a creative rewriting of Milan's past. However, this did not mean that early Milan was a blank canvas, on which Fiamma could create a narrative *ex nihilo*. Livy, Paul the Deacon, Landolfo Seniore, and even the 14th-century notary Benzo d'Alessandria, to name a few, were all influences on Fiamma, though their narratives of early Milanese history suffered from significant lacunae and could also be heavily manipulated. This is particularly obvious in Fiamma's effort to create archetypes for signorial government, a core function of his texts.

This was a programme with two parts. First, as Busch has already shown, Fiamma endeavoured to populate his early history of Milan with as many signorial figures as possible. The programme was both novel and ingenious. The Milanesi, of course, had always known that their city had hosted royalty, who appear – albeit fleetingly – even in the *Historia* of Giovanni Cermenate (a Milanese historian who wrote during the Trecento), which appropriates from Papias and Livy a narrative for the founding of Milan first by Noah's great grandson Subres (who called the city *Subria*) and then by Bellovesus, the nephew of a Celtic king, who renamed it *Mediolanum*.[30] What is unique about Fiamma's histories is that they are the first to describe Milan's monarchical traditions in significant detail, both collating and developing the narratives of their source material to enumerate Milan's exalted biblical, Trojan, and Lombard rulers, among many others. Filling in the narrative gaps was admittedly a difficult task. "Because Milan was destroyed and its books and chronicles were destroyed," Fiamma reasons, "it cannot be known how many kings or counts or viscounts there were up to the time of blessed Ambrose."[31] Nevertheless, Fiamma was able to fill his histories with the memories of not only these kings and counts and viscounts, but also lords and dukes and strongmen, with each successive text offering a more detailed pedigree than the one before it. [32] These exemplars of government served to create a powerful precedent for rule by an authoritarian regime, functioning to anticipate the Visconti signoria. (The exception is the case of the

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.[29] The *Chronicon Extravagans*, in fact, specifically engages with this question, and defends the primacy of the Ambrosian church. See CE A275, p. 124.
[30] G. Cermenate, *Historia Iohannis de Cermenate*, edited by L.A. Ferrai (Roma, 1889), pp. 5-8. A similar narrative appears in Benzo d'Alessandria: L.A. Ferrai, "Bentii Alexandrini de Mediolano civitate Opusculum ex chronico eiusdem excerptum", *BSI*, 9 (1890), pp. 15-17.
[31] PN, chapter 55.
[32] Busch, *Die Mailänder Geschichtsschreibung,* pp. 208-13, 220-4.

vicecomites, who were not lords in their own right but instead functionaries of both the archbishops and the dukes, in which capacity they exercised *iudicium sanguinis*. The *Chronicon Maius* tells us – accurately – that the Visconti were descended from the *vicecomites*, implying that the dynasty had always possessed judicial rights in the city.[33]) Although there are differences in how each history represents these signorial figures, the texts are consistent in their intention to use them as antecedents for the Visconti signoria.

Two classes of archetype are worth additional examination for their prominence in the texts. The first is Fiamma's representation of the dukes, a form of government that allegedly existed in Milan from antiquity to roughly the 11th century. Dukes were useful models for monarchical government, both in Milan and elsewhere. In Verona, for instance, the military leadership of two *duces* – Brennus (founder of Verona) and Ezzelino da Romano – are recalled in the early 14th century by the poet-historian Ferreto Ferreti to anticipate the strongman rule of Cangrande della Scala. (Ferreto, somewhat surprisingly, but not uniquely, remembers Ezzelino as a model ruler).[34] In Milan, Fiamma was able to draw on a rich literary tradition to imagine an authoritarian regime of dukes. His dukes in part derive from their idealized representation in the 11th-century historian Landolfo Seniore (the name given to the author of the *Historia Mediolanensis* – in fact, the text is anonymous):

....for a time dwelling in the palaces near the church of San Protaso, or whatever was dignified, the dukes managed the city carefully, and whatever had been done without care, they reformed wisely and zealously and when something was done unjustly they quickly managed both to mend and to satisfy the injured through a trial. They were protection for the orphans, aid for the troubled, relief for the widows, nourishment for the weak, a law to the unjust, justice to the deceitful, and terror to bandits. And all the merchants and rustics and farmers and cattle drivers lived securely while doing their business, concerning themselves with their own affairs. Having secured honours for the ecclesiastics and clerics and with all prospering, everyone lived in peace. There was not any authority nor castle of a family that cared to help someone act against another unjustly, or that cared to defend or free someone struggling against the command of the dukes. Except for the times in which they strongly and gallantly fought far and wide in the wars of kings and in throngs of enemies, they enjoyed peace and joy humbly and devotedly.[35]

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[33] CM, pp. 493-4, footnote 1. GA, pp. 68-9 has a slightly different variation of this story.
[34] G.M. Gianola, "L'Ecerinide di Ferreto Ferreti", *Studi Medievali*, 25 (1984).
[35] Landulfus Senior, "Historia Mediolanensis", in W. Wattenbach and L. Bethman (eds.) *MGH*, *Tomus Scriptorum*, 8 (Hannover, 1898), pp. 62-3: *...per tempora in palatiis iuxta ecclesiam sancti Protaxii morantes, quicquid honestum erat, civitati curiose procurabant, et quod incaute fractum, studiose ac sapienter consolidabant, et quod iniuste actum in aliquo, continuo per aliquam causam emendare et satisfacere iniuriantem procurabant. Praesidium erant orphanis, adiutorium tribulatis, viduis subsidium parvulis nutrimentum, lex erant iniustis, iustitia perfidis, timorque latronibus. Omnes enim mercatores et rustici, aratores et bebulci, secure propria negotia agentes victitabant, singula sua curantes; ecclesiarum et clericorum honoribus solliciti, prosperantibus universis, in pace vivebant.*

In Landolfo's history, the description of a prosperous ducal age was meant to contrast with what Landolfo perceived to the political turmoil of the present, in which the ascendancy of the *patarini* had threatened both the church's and the city's traditional *libertas*.[36] The concept, however, seems initially not to have resonated, vanishing from the next few centuries of Milan's historiography (unsurprisingly, given the anti-monarchism of the period), until it was rediscovered in the early 14th-century by Benzo d'Alessandria, a notary and meticulous chronicler of urban history (including of Milan). Benzo offers a long passage in praise of ducal government, almost entirely lifted from Landolfo, including that the dukes protected the poor, the aggrieved, widows, and the weak.[37] Other elements of the text are omitted, such as that the dukes secured the roads for merchants and honoured Milan's ecclesiastics (Benzo was writing an *Opusculum*, so perhaps their absence was a sacrifice to brevity). There are, however, a few novel features to Benzo's account:

> the dukes after the [death] of Saint Ambrose ruled, assuming office for life by election, just as happens in Venice. To them were conferred the dukedom of Burgaria, the county of Seprio, and the marquisate of Martesana. A duke had a right to make statutes for the community, to inherit property without heirs, and many other rights...[38]

The reason for these changes – particularly the references to election for life and the right to make statutes – was to render the dukes a distant ancestor to contemporary signori, who would claim similar privileges. The list of ducal claims over Burgaria, Seprio, and Martesana stressed the rights of the signoria over key constituencies of Milan's contado, long an important objective of the city and its

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Non erat dignitas neque parentum munitio, quae (quem) aliquem adversus alterum iniuste agentem emendare, aut secundum ducum imperium renitentem defendere ac liberare curaret. Enim praeter tempora, in quibus regum bellis aut inimicorum catervis longe lateque dispersis strenuissime ac decenter insistebant, pacem et gaudium humiliter ac devote fruebantur.

[36] On Landolfo, see C. Violante, *La pataria milanese e la riforma ecclesiastica* (Rome, 1955), pp. 22-26; B. Stock, *The implications of literacy: written language and models of interpretation in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Princeton, 1983), pp. 174-215 (includes a decent historiography); J. Busch, "Landulf Senioris Historia Mediolanensis Uberlieferung, Datierung, und Intention", *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 45, (1989), pp. 1-30.

[37] Ferrai, "Bentii Alexandrini", p. 35.

[38] Ferrai, "Bentii Alexandrini", p. 35:*...duces post [mortem] beati Ambrosii Mediolanum regebant, qui per electionem, sicut Venetiis fit, assumiebantur ad vitam ; quibus etiam conferebantur ducatus Burgariae, comitatus Seprii et marchionatus Marthexanae. Sui etiam iuris erat communitatis staterà. hereditas quoque sine liberis decedentium et alia multa...*

rulers.[39] Benzo's dukes were not merely the representation of an urban golden age, but a signorial archetype.

Fiamma developed this archetype in his own histories. The *Manipulus Florum* borrows from Benzo and diligently goes back to his original source, appropriating from Landolfo several details that Benzo had ignored, such as that the dukes secured the roads for merchants, *rustici* and farmers, and that they honoured Milan's ecclesiastics. A concern for roadways was topical during a period when the Visconti were focused on maintaining and safeguarding internal trade routes and waterways. We can also appreciate why the Dominican friar would have made sure to stress the dukes' relationship to the clergy.[40] Here is Fiamma's passage concerning the dukes in full.

After the death of the blessed Saint Ambrose, with the empire gone from the city of Milan, the city began to be ruled and governed by dukes. These dukes assumed office for life by election, just as happens in Venice. To them were afforded these dignities: There was a duke of Burgaria, count of Seprio, and marquis of Martesana. A duke had the right to determine the weights of the community. He was the heir to all without heirs. For every newborn he received a tax, for every wood wagon he received some wood, for every basket of fish he claimed a small fish, for every oven of bread he received a loaf...He lived at other times of the year in the palaces near the church of San Protaso, where today is the *Curia Ducis*, or what is colloquially called the *Cordisium*. This duke swore to maintain the aforesaid statutes; that is, that he was honest, that he take care of the communities of villages, citizens and the city, that he punish injuries harshly, that he totally calm disturbances of the citizens. He was protection for the orphans, aid for the troubled, subsidy for the widows, defence for children, a law to the unjust, justice to the deceitful, and fear to thieves. And every merchant and rustic and cattle driver could go securely to wherever he wanted. He served the offices of the ecclesiastics and clerics; he acted against all enemies. On account of these things, he was adored by the people as if he were God. In this way the city of Milan had the highest peace, and enjoyed the greatest happiness.[41]

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[39] For Milan's relationship with its contado, see A. Gamberini, "Il contado di Milano nel Trecento", in L.C. Mauri (ed.) *Contado e città in dialogo: Comuni urbani e comunità rurali nella Lombardia medievale* (Milan, 2003).

[40] L. Frangioni, *Milano e le sue strade. Costi di trasporto e vie di commercio dei prodotti milanesi alla fine del Trecento* (Bologna, 1983). G. Soldi Rondinini, "Le vie transalpine del commercio milanese dal secolo XIII al XV", in *Felix olim Lombardia. Studi di storia padana dedicatati dagli allievi a Giuseppe Martini* (Milan, 1977).

[41] MF, pp. 571-2: *Sublato itaque Imperio de Urbe Mediolani post mortem Beati Ambrosii Civitas Mediolani per Duces regi ac gubernari coepit. Hi enim Duces per electionem, sicut modo fit Venetiis, assumebantur ad vitam, quibus hae dignitates collatae sunt. Scilicet quod erat Dux Burgariae, Comes Seprii, Marchi Martesanae. Item suum erat ius staterae Comunitatis. Omnibus sine herede decedentibus heres erat. De quolibet nato censum recipiebat; de quolibet curru lignorum unum lignum habebat, de qualibet sporta piscium mediocrem piscem suum esse dicebat; de qualibet fornata panis unum panem recipiebat...ceteris temporibus anni habitabat in Palatiis iuxta Ecclsiam Sancri Protasii ad Monachos, ubi usque hodie Curia Ducis, sive vulgo Cordisium dicitur. Iste Dux iurabat servare infrascripta Statuta videlicet: quod honestum erat. Comunitatibus Villarium, Civibus et Civitate curiose procurabat; iniurias acriter puniebat; turbationes Civium totaliter sedabat. Praesidium erat Orphanis, tribulatis solatium, viduis subsidium, parvulis defensio, iniustis lex, iustitia perfidis, timorque latronibus. Omnisque mercator, sive rusticus, sive bubulcus, quo volebat poterat ire secutus.*

Here again, what is most striking is what Fiamma adds to or changes about his source material. Intriguingly, Fiamma uses only singular verb forms – as opposed to the plural favoured by Landolfo and Benzo – to suggest that only one duke (*iste dux*) ruled at a time, stressing that ducal government was a form of one-man rule. Also noteworthy is the novel addition that "the duke calmed disturbances of the citizens", a line that evokes the intense urban discord of the 14th century and alludes to the responsibility of signori to enforce peace.

As in Benzo, the effect of Fiamma's portrayal of the dukes is to represent their lordship in signorial terms. Indeed, the link to the signoria is better made by Fiamma. Notable is that the passage ends with the claim that "the duke was adored by the *populus* as if he were God." Such constructions Fiamma reserves only for signorial figures, such as Pagano della Torre (a 13th-century signore) and Ottone Visconti, the first signore of the Visconti family.[42] In the *Manipulus Florum*, this renders the dukes one of the more powerful archetypes for signorial lordship – not least because Fiamma goes so far as to identify the first duke of Milan as Saint Ambrose himself (which contradicts Fiamma's claim that the dukes were inaugurated *post mortem Beati Ambrosii*, but the friar is nothing if not inconsistent).[43]

The project continues into the *Galvagnana* and *Chronicon Maius*. The former complicates the *Manipulus Florum*'s history by giving Milan two different ducal regimes. One was created by a Roman emperor and lasts but briefly. The dukes are said to have served as imperial vicars, tasked with "ruling, governing, punishing, [and] judging".[44] This eloquently summarises the dukes' signorial prerogatives, and it sanctions the office with the authority of the empire, a timely subject as the Visconti's negotiators came close in 1338 to procuring vicariates for legitimating the signoria (albeit, during a period when the pope recognized himself as emperor during the *imperium vacans*).[45] A ducal regime later reappears under the reign of Saint Ambrose, who was himself responsible for its re-establishment (like the *Manipulus Florum*, the

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Ecclesiarum et Clericorum honores integre servabat; contra hostes erat solicitus. Propter quae quasi Deus a populo adorabatur, sic quod Civitas Mediolani summa pace, summoque gaudio fruebatur.

[42] MF, p. 677: *quasi Deus laudabatur* (for Paganus). MF, p. 705: *uti Deus ab omnibus colebatur* (for Otto).

[43] MF, p. 566.

[44] GA, p. 68: *in puris limitatà ad regendum, gubernandum, puniendum, iudicandum qui in cunctis civitatibus et castris aliquas idoneas personas in suum adiutorium poterat ad regendum instituere, suam potestatem limitare, dilitare, vel restringere de officio deponere et alium substituere et similia facere.*

[45] G. Biscaro, "Le relazioni dei Visconti di Milano con la Chiesa", *ASL*, 5/3 (1920), pp. 216-9.

text enhances the dignity of the office by associating it with Milan's patron saint). Ambrose's dukes are characterised much as they are in the *Manipulus Florum*, though the *Galvagnana* adds that the ducal government was recognised as uniquely suited to the task of urban pacification, explaining that in Milan it was the "middling men who loved peace" that most wanted their lordship.[46] We might expect the *Chronicon Maius* to contribute even further to the archetype, but in fact the text offers little that has not been seen before.[47] One reason for this may be that by the time of the *Chronicon Maius*'s composition, Fiamma was less enthusiastic about the dukes as an archetype, favouring instead the counts of Angleria.

These counts of Angleria are the second archetype that merit scrutiny, important both in terms of their narrative impact and their lasting influence on the Visconti's public image.[48] By the end of the century, the Visconti's descent from the counts had become, if not accepted fact, at least a frequently rehearsed claim.[49] How Fiamma's histories imagine the counts has already been much discussed by Jörg Busch, so will not be dwelled on here. They are a royal family which Fiamma's histories idiosyncratically allege to have been related to the Trojans, the Lombard kings, and even the famous Frankish paladin Roland.[50] They are also identified as the ancestors of the Visconti, having ruled Milan from antiquity until the advent of Barbarossa, who overthrows the counts upon capturing the city.[51] Fiamma relates the counts to almost every significant Milanese ruler up to the age of Barbarossa. It is a powerful archetype, providing the Visconti an illustrious pedigree and functioning to transform the early history of Milan into a history of a single dynasty.[52] Descent from the counts makes the Visconti not just noble, but links the family to the earliest days of the city, rendering their political ascendancy in the 14th-century a restoration of Milan's ancient and venerable political order.

The house is not the creation of Fiamma, though his histories provide a substantial contribution to the myth. The counts first appear in the *Chronica Danielis*,

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[46] GA, p. 236.
[47] CM A275, p. 138.
[48] One of the first studies touching on the invention of a Visconti ancestry is G. Biscaro, *I maggiori dei Visconti, signori di Milano*, *ASL*, 16 (1911). But Busch is more thorough.
[49] For some of the literature, see Majocchi, *Pavia città regia*, pp. 211, 214, 218.
[50] The relationship to Roland appears in CE, p. 499.
[51] Busch, *Die Mailänder Geschichtsschreibung.* pp. 225-231.
[52] On the role of genealogy in medieval historiography, see G. Spiegel, "Genealogy: Form and Function in Medieval Historiography", in *The Past as Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore, 1997).

a Milanese history that probably dates to around the middle to late 13th century, coterminous with the political ascendancy of the Visconti's rivals, the Torriani.[53] They are called the *comites de Inglexio*, and are said to have ruled Milan up to 1162, the year Barbarossa ordered the commune to be razed (and the counts vanquished). The history suggests the house was the ancestor to the Torriani, a relationship indicated, among other things, by their identification with the Torriani's heraldic symbol: the lion.[54] The counts are also referenced in the annalistic chronicle of the priest and valvassore Goffredo da Bussero, though without indication that the Torriani were the counts' heirs. [55] This is surprising, since Goffredo was a partisan of the Torriani, whose deeds make up a significant portion of his chronicle's narrative (the Visconti, meanwhile, are conspicuously absent from the text).[56] It is possible either that Goffredo did not understand that the counts were supposed to be the ancestors of the Torriani or that he believed the genetic link was well enough known not to require acknowledgement. If the former, this would help explain why Fiamma believed he could render the Visconti – and not the Torriani – the heirs of the counts instead.

To that end, Fiamma rebrands the counts as the counts of Angleria – not Inglexio – in reference to the county of Angleria, originally a patrimony of the Ambrosian church, but – ever since Ottone Visconti became archbishop – effectively a patrimony of the Visconti house.[57] Fiamma otherwise models his counts closely on the *Chronica Danielis*'s narrative, appropriating key elements from the text, such as their descent from the Lombard kings and their near extinction during Milan's war with Barbarossa. How each of Fiamma's histories engage with the myth varies.[58] They do not appear in the *Manipulus Florum*, which altogether supplies a rather limited ancestry for the Visconti. There is, however, an Anglus Anglerie in the text, who is

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[53] The dating comes from Busch, *Die Mailander Geschichtsschreibung*, pp. 148-78, based on his analysis of the text's functionality. His arguments will not be rehearsed here, but will occasionally be referenced throughout this chapter. There is an academic tradition that dates the text to the early 14th century, but it is entirely without merit. See A.A. Settia, "Il sogno regio dei Visconti, Pavia e la Certosa", *Annali di Storia Pavese*, 25 (1997), pp. 13-14. P. Majocchi, *Pavia città regia*, pp. 168-9.
[54] Busch, *Die Mailänder Geschichtsschreibung*, p. 154: Busch observes that the lion is documented as the symbol of Pagano della Torre (MF, p. 677) and is on the tomb of Martino della Torre in Milan's monastery of Chiaravalle (G. Giulini, *Memorie spettanti alla storia, al governo e alla descrizione della città e campagna di Milano ne' secoli bassi*, 4 (Milan, 1854-7), pp. 566-67.
[55] L. Grazioli, "La Cronaca di Goffredo da Bussero", *ASL*, 33 (1906), pp. 240-1. The original manuscript is the Codex Trivulziano 1218, C.50. Note that the history was originally thought to have been a different text: F. Savio, "*La cronaca di Filippo da Castelseprio*", *Atti della Accademia delle scienze di Torino,* 41 (1905-1906).
[56] G. Rondinini Soldi "Bussero, Goffredo da", in *DBI*, 15 (1972).
[57] See footnote 102.
[58] P. Majoochi, *Pavia città regia*, p. 172.

associated with the county of Angleria. And yet, he is not identified as anyone's ancestor. The *Galvagnana*, by contrast, appropriates the entirety of the *Chronica Danielis*'s narrative for the counts, suggesting (albeit, confusingly) that the counts ruled alongside the city's ancient regime of dukes. The *Chronicon Maius* cleans up the narrative by eliminating the ducal archetype and by linking the counts to the Trojan prince Aeneas and the aforementioned Anglus Anglerie (who gives his name to the county of Angleria, from which the counts of Angleria receive their cognomen). A genealogical tree in the *Galvagnana* explicitly relates the counts to the Visconti.[59] The project continues into the *Politia Novella*, Fiamma's pre-history of Milan, which fills in some more genealogical gaps.[60] The illocutive force of this project is unambiguous: The Visconti could claim the most exalted ancestry in Milan, with the implication that lordship was a blood right.

Targeted Audiences

So far, Fiamma's histories are not too different in function to other medieval chronicles. The chronicles of Saint-Denis, for instance, also create a past that accords with the present, stressing above all the continuity of institutions and, through an emphasis on genealogical ties, the dynasties that wielded power. [61] But the establishment of archetypes does not alone explain the political utility of Fiamma's texts. We are left with two questions. First, the representation of a regime of dukes or counts constitutes only a small portion of each text. What is the function of each text's narrative after the mid 11th century, when ducal government collapsed and the counts of Angleria no longer played a significant political role? Second, if each text served the same function of supplying a archetype for the Visconti signoria, why produce three? Surely this project to elaborate a monarchical tradition, a programme that continued into Fiamma's *Politia Novella*, is not enough to explain why Fiamma endeavoured to write several political histories of Milan over a rather restricted timeframe (we must remember that the first three histories were produced only a year apart between 1337 and 1339).

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[59] See GA, p. 560.
[60] Busch, *Die Mailänder Geschichtsschreibung*, p. 232: A helpful table of each text's genealogy appears here, though it ignores the data from the *Galvagnana*'s genealogical tree that also related the Visconti to Aeneas.
[61] See G. Spiegel, *The Past as Text* (London, 1999), pp. 97-8.

Indeed, it would be hasty to dismiss Fiamma's earlier works, the *Manipulus Florum* and the *Galvagnana*, or even the *Chronicon Maius*, as inchoate because they do not furnish as fully detailed a Visconti genealogy as the *Politia Novella*. We return to our original thesis that each history served a performative function to reshape the historical consciousness of particular political communities, an impact irrespective of their relationship to one another. Understanding the audience of each text is key to understanding each history's distinct function. To illustrate the point, let us compare their narratives of an 11th-century urban uprising led by the nobleman Lanzone da Corte.

The *Manipulus Florum*, the first of the series, offers the following version of events: In the year 1040, Milan's nobles usurp the rights of the city's reigning dukes to seize control of its government. The city is soon beset by constant infighting (*continue iurgia*), because a *popularis* is either killed or captured or oppressed by a noble.[62] The *populares* band under the leadership of Lanzone, with whose support the other nobles are pushed into exile. The exiles besiege Milan in an effort to starve its population, leading Lanzone to turn to the German emperor for military support. Although an agreement is reached that Milan will be delivered to the emperor, which would have provided the *populus* protection from the nobility, Lanzone soon after reconsiders, supposing that to invite the emperor's soldiers to Milan would risk the freedom of its sons and the virtue of its wives.[63] He enters into peace talks with the nobles, who return to Milan and demand that the *populus* surrender Lanzone to them. The *populus* consent, and Lanzone is exiled.[64] The nobility then seize control of the city's government, passing one statute that prevented Lanzone and his family from returning to Milan and another statute that limited the penalty a noble would incur for murdering a *popularis*.[65] Fiamma calls this last a statute *in odium populi*, a fitting enough term that will be used throughout this chapter to refer to any law with unequal penalties for murder.

The *Manipulus Florum*'s narrative, undeniably hostile to the nobility, is transformed considerably in the *Galvagnana*'s account. Here, the nobles do not usurp

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[62] MF, p. 621: *...in Civitate Mediolani continue iurgia fiebant, quia indifferenter popularis caedebatur a Nobili, capiebatur, aut diversis tributis augariabatur, atroces pugnae commitebantur, nunc hic cadebat Nobilis, nunc popularis.*
[63] MF, p. 622: *si intrant Civitatem Mediolani, uxores nostra facient suas, filii nostri servi sui erunt.*
[64] MF, p. 621-22.
[65] MF, p. 623.

the rights of Milan's dukes, but are freely given them.[66] There is, additionally, no indication that a noble killed or oppressed a *popularis*. Nevertheless, the *populus* rebel against the nobility around the year 1040, electing Lanzone as their leader and thus triggering a civil war.[67] Once again, Lanzone negotiates terms for the intervention of the German emperor. He does not, however, soon renege on his agreement or open peace talks with the nobles. Instead, it is the nobles who initiate peace negotiations with Lanzone, rendering the intervention of the emperor unnecessary. The implication is that it was nobles who rescue Milan from a German yoke. While the nobles do exile Lanzone upon re-entering the city, the text justifies this by noting that Lanzone had refused to provide restitution for damage to their property.[68]

Having written one text with a perspective favourable to the *populares* and another to the nobles, Fiamma composed one final history, the *Chronicon Maius*, whose account dispenses with the dukes and instead centres on the archbishop and a third faction, the *società della Motta*.[69] Herein, it is the archbishop Ariberto that triggers factional conflict when he expels a group of petty nobles that were unwilling to pay him homage.[70] The petty nobles rebrand themselves the *società della Motta* and gain support from the *populares*, who unsuccessfully appeal to the archbishop to allow their return from exile. The *populares* rebel when the archbishop ignores their demands, turning to Lanzone for leadership. However, in this version of events, the archbishop brokers a peace, thereby preventing Lanzone from betraying the city to the emperor.[71]

The variations in narrative suggest one text was intended for Milan's *populares*, a second for nobles, and a third for perhaps either the *società della Motta* or a likeminded readership of urban elites. Naturally, some textual deconstruction will be required to reveal more fully each text's function. What is immediately clear,

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[66] GA, p 117: *In processu temporis quidam Duces excrescentibus malis honorificentiam, atque suam dignitatum magnificentiam faciendo aliquos Cattaneos condiviserunt, sicque paulatim denudantes pauperos sunt effecti, sicque eos reverentia viluit, et populus cepit Cattaneos revereri, maiora tamen civitatis Ducibus manu, et consiliis adhuc regentibus.*

[67] The Galvagnana's account of Lanzone's rebellion does not provide any explanation for its cause. One hundred-fifty pages earlier, however, we get one: *Ex hoc* [referring to the nobility's acquisition of ducal prerogatives] *populi et artistae percognoscens ex novis capitaneis et valvassoris ut fiorent gracissima bella concitarunt.*

[68] GA, pp. 267-8.

[69] On the Motta, see footnote 165.

[70] CM, p. 609.

[71] CM, pp. 614-617.

however, is that the memory of Lanzone's rebellion could vary sharply between different audiences.

Although any memory of urban discord would be remembered differently by different factions, Lanzone's rebellion was especially susceptible to re-interpretation. It is one of the earliest instances of urban discord in Milan's collective historical memory. The incident appears in the late 11th-century texts of, respectively, Arnolfo and Landolfo, and also in the early 14th-century *Opusculum* by Benzo d'Alessandria, where it is explicitly used to mark the end of an era of peace and the beginning of one of internecine discord in the city.[72] The episode, that is to say, was itself a primary archetype for factional violence. As we will see, Fiamma's particular descriptions of the event set the model for how each text patterns conflict among factions.

This complicates our understanding of the function of Fiamma's texts. While they provide archetypes for signorial lordship, they do so in the context of a particular faction's social memories. This allows each text to tailor its representation of signorial lordship, making an argument for monarchism that aligns with the mental matrix of a particular faction. Put another way, Fiamma's histories are targeted texts that hijack social memories to demonstrate the historical partnership between factions and signori.

In that vein, we need to consider how these texts function to overlap social memories with archetypes of signorial government. Answering will require a close examination of each text's rhetorical strategies and of Fiamma's use or misuse of his source material. The comparison of individual narratives between Fiamma's texts will also be helpful in identifying each history's unique discourse. By deconstructing the texts in this way, we can come closer to understanding how signorial lordship was legitimated for different factions.

The *Manipulus Florum*

The protagonists of the *Manipulus Florum* are undeniably the *populus*, defined in part by what they are not (nobles) and in part by their occupations as *mercatores* and *artistae*, the latter identified as including *carnifices, furnarii, caligarii, sutores, fabri,*

[72] Arnulfus, "Arnulfi gesta archiepiscoporum Mediolanensium usque ad a. 1077" in G.H. Pertz (ed.) *MGH*, *Tomus Scriptorum*, 8 (Hannover, 1848), pp. 16-17. Landolfo, pp. 63-5. Ferrai, "Bentii Alexandrini", pp. 35-36.

lanistae, spociarii, camentarii, et similes. Though Fiamma mostly treats this disparate group as a single social force, he does acknowledge that at some point (he dates it to 1198) the *populus* split between merchants and artisans, these last forming an exclusive social congregation, the *credenza* of Saint Ambrose.[73] This distinction that associates the *credenza* exclusively with artisans, however, is not always observed, with Fiamma on at least one occasion identifying the *credenza* with the whole of the *populus* faction.[74] This is not so much carelessness as it is a reflection of the text's lack of interest in the affairs of the merchants, who receive short shrift. The *Manipulus Florum* is instead best understood as a vessel for the memories of Milan's artisanal *populus*, who were suspicious of nobles, sympathetic to the Torriani, and the engine of Milan's great manufacturing tradition.[75]

The factional narrative of the *Manipulus Florum* effectively starts in the early 4th century. We have already met the dukes, who first appear in the text soon after the death of Saint Ambrose, constituting Milan's first autonomous government since the *sublatum imperium de urbe mediolani* (a reference to Saint Ambrose allegedly having been the last imperial vicar to rule Milan until the restoration of the empire centuries later). [76] The language of the *Manipulus Florum* stresses the intimate bond between the dukes and Milan's *populus*, validating the former's lordship as an expression of the popular will. We have already encountered some of this language, such as that the dukes were elected by the people or that they were adored *quasi Deus*. The institution is said to have made such an imprint on the collective consciousness of Milan's *populus* that, when it temporarily disappears around the 9th century, the faction requests that it be re-established, so that Milan might be ruled as it had been accustomed.[77]

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[73] MF. p. 611, 644. On the credenza, see: I. Ghiron, "La credenza di S. Ambrogio o la lotta dei nobili e del popolo di Milano *(*1198-1292*)"*, *ASL* (1876 and 1877), pp. 583-609, 70-123.
[74] MF, p. 677: *...Populus in loco eius deputato, quo Credentia dicitur...* On another occasion, the text appears to conflate the *populus* and artisans. MF, p. 657: *...Populus obtinuit in electionem Consulum unum magnum ius, quia ex Artistis eligebantur usque ad centum.*
[75] Milan was undoubtedly the most industrialized city in Italy and all of Europe. Unlike in Florence (where there was not as meaningful a separation betweens artisans and merchants), the artisanal *populus*, rather than the merchant *populus*, were the more politically influential force (at least in the 13th and early 14th centuries). S.R. Epstein, "Manifatture tessili e strutture politico istituzionali nella Lombardia tardomedievale. Ipotesi di ricerca", in *Studi di Storia medioevale e di diplomatica*, 14 (1993), pp. 55-90. Also see, P. Grillo, *Milano in età comunale (1183-1276): istituzioni, società, economia* (Spoleto, 2001) pp. 209-224.
[76] MF, p. 571.
[77] MF, p. 609:

We have already made note of the rosy language Fiamma uses to describe the ducal regime. The dukes, partnered with a succession of good archbishops, are said to have presided over a period of prosperity, which – we are further informed – was coincident with a social order free of factional division. At least up to the 10th century, Fiamma contends, "there were no citizens who were called nobles", although – Fiamma qualifies – "some citizens were more distinguished either by virtue of their wealth or their parents."[78] The social equilibrium changes when the archbishop Landolfo divides the patrimony of the Ambrosian church among his brothers, thereby creating Milan's *capitanei* (a high grade of nobility) by investing them in *oppida* in the countryside.[79] This provokes the *populus* to expel the archbishop and his brothers, engendering what Fiamma identifies as "the first division made between the nobles from one party and the *populus* from another, a division which has never ended."[80] It is a division compounded by a second "wicked investiture" (*nefanda investitura*) from ecclesiastical property, effectively creating more captains *in plebibus, aut Castris, aut in portis Civitatis*.[81]

This narrative derives from Landolfo Seniore (who was, nevertheless, not its inventor), but is subtly distorted by the *Manipulus Florum*. According to Fiamma's source, the "wicked investiture" (*detestanda investitura*) of Archbishop Landolfo does not create Milan's nobility, but merely augments the wealth of pre-existing *milites maiores*.[82] What the *Manipulus Florum* does is to reshape Landolfo Seniore's narrative about the decline of the church into a narrative about the illegitimate birth of the nobility.[83]

This critical representation of the nobility continues into the text's narrative of Lanzone's rebellion, where once again the nobles are accused of acquiring *iura* illegally – this time by "usurping" (*usurpare*) them from the dukes themselves, as we have seen. That the *populus* attempt to defend the ducal regime, demanding under Lanzone the restoration of the dukes' *iura*, locates the *populus* with Milan's legitimate

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[78] MF, p. 609. *Isto enim tempore in Civitate Mediolani non erant aliqui Cives, qui dicerentur nobiles, sed licet aliquis esset aut in divitiis, aut in parentibus altero insignior.*
[79] Fiamma uses *capitanei*, *cattanei*, and *capitani* interchangeably. For sake of consistency, we will restrict our usage to *capitanei*.
[80] MF, pp. 610: *et ista fuit prima divisio facta inter Nobiles ex una parte, et Populus ex altera, quae divisio numquam finem habuit.* [Note: Fiamma provides this narrative twice. For the other narrative, see MF, pp. 608-609.]
[81] MF, pp. 611.
[82] Landolfo, p. 55.
[83] For Landolfo bibliography, see above footnote 36.

political order. By contrast, the nobles are identified with a regime of injustice, oppression, and social division, exemplifed by the statutes *in odium populi* which they enact upon returning to Milan from exile.

We ought to pause to consider the *Manipulus Florum*'s narrative framework, and specifically to compare it with the narrative of the *Chronica Danielis*. That 13th-century history supposes a regime of counts that is in league with the *populus* and hostile to the nobility. The nobility is barred, for example, from usury or from carrying swords (with the noteworthy exception of gilded, ornamental blades).[84] The *Chronica Danielis* tells us, however, that in the late 12th century the counts were betrayed by Milan's nobility and its archbishop, who help Frederick Barbarossa seize control of Milan and overthrow its counts. A new regime led by the nobility then enacts the statutes *in odium populi*.[85] On a fundamental level, the *Manipulus Florum*'s own narrative structure for the overthrow of the ducal regime follows from this narrative: first a regime in league with the *populus* presides over Milan; then the city's nobility overthrow it; finally, a regime of the nobility oppresses the *populus* with hostile statutes.

That the *Manipulus Florum* should loosely resemble the *Chronica Danielis*'s narrative is rather surprising. The narrative from the *Chronica*, as Busch argues, functioned as a thinly veiled allegory for the 13th-century civil war between Milan's *populus* and nobility. The text was written to favour Milan's presiding regime, led by the *populus* and the Torriani, functioning to stigmatise their opponents – the nobility and their leader, Archbishop Ottone Visconti – by implying their analogue in the treacherous 12th-century nobility and archbishop of Milan.[86] The genius of the *Manipulus Florum* is to impose the general structure of this popular social memory onto a new narrative framework of the Milanese past, reconciling it with sources like the *Annales Datius* (a collection of ecclesiastical histories that included Arnulfo and Landolfo Seniore), while also divorcing it (as we will see) from its strict association with the Visconti's opponents, the Torriani.[87] That said, it is curious that the *Chronica*

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[84] A. Cinquini (ed.), "Una cronaca milanese inedita del secolo XIII. La Chronica Danielis", *Miscellanea di storia e cultura ecclesiastica*, 4 (1905-1906), pp. 169-70. Hereafter CD.
[85] CD, p. 188.
[86] Busch notes, in one of his more compelling arguments for the *Chronica Danielis* as a piece of pro-Torriani literature, that its list of 12th-century noble traitors incriminates families hostile to the Torriani in the 13th century. Busch, *Die Mailänder Geschichtschreibung*, pp. 157-169.
[87] L.A. Ferrai "Gli annali di Dazio e i patarini", *ASL*, 19 (1892).

Danielis is never cited in the *Manipulus Florum*.[88] It may be that Fiamma was unaware of the text at the time of the *Manipulus Florum*'s composition (the *Chronica Danielis* is, however, cited in his later histories). The resemblance between its narrative and the *Chronica Danielis* therefore might reflect an oral memory of noble oppression (which is also captured in the *Chronica Danielis*).

The structure of this factional narrative continues to bear on the *Manipulus Florum*'s account for events in the Duecento. The text explains that, after the restoration of Milan's commune in 1166, the city came to be ruled by *tria dominia*: a council, a podestà, and an archbishop.[89] Under this mixed regime, the *populus* enjoyed a respite from noble violence, at least initially, "because when the city was again rebuilt, the nobles were deprived of their rights of nobility, and the *populus* obtained a great right for the election of consuls."[90] But for reasons that are never made clear, the artisans decide to elect 200 nobles as consuls and, in 1203, the *credenza* elects three more nobles as podestà. The result of this bizarre behaviour is the revitalisation of the nobility as a political force, leading to the renewal of factional conflict between the *credenza* of the *populus* and the nobility's *galiarde* (that faction's military wing). Fiamma explains that the noble consuls of Milan create "most wicked statutes against the *populus*, as is read above in the history of Lanzone da Corte".[91] Then in 1240 and 1257, the statutes *in odium populi* are reissued for a third and fourth time, permitting the nobles – it is explained – to murder *populares* to whom they owed money or whose wives or daughters they wanted as their own.[92]

The fortune of the *populus* changes with the political ascent of Pagano della Torre, who, promising to liberate the *populus* from the noble yoke, is elected as podestà in 1240. In 1257, the *populares* successfully expel the nobles, thereby bringing an end to the *iniquissimum statutum* (*in odium populi*). Two years later the

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[88] L. Fasola, "Una famiglia di sostenitori milanesi di Federico I. Per la storia dei rapporti dell'imperatore con le forze politiche e sociali della Lombardia", *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 52 (1972), p. 140.
[89] The podestà dates as first appearing in 1186 (MF, p. 655); the consularia, 1187 (MF, p. 656). Although a *consularia* technically means consulate, Fiamma uses the word as if it meant council.
[90] MF, p. 657: *Quia enim Civitas de nova fuerat readificata, Nobiles fuerant suis nobilitatibus privati, et Populus obtinuit in electionem Consulum unum magnum ius.*
[91] MF, p. 657: *Et tunc contra Populum facta sunt Statuta iniquissima, sicut supra legitur in Historia Lanzonis de Curte.*
[92] MF, p. 686.

Torriani regime is definitively established in the city under Martino della Torre, as *populi anzianus et dominus*.[93]

Like Milan's ancient dukes and Lanzone da Corte, the Torriani are archetypes for signorial strongmen who served the interests of the *populus*. That the *Manipulus Florum* presents a favourable image of the clan, notwithstanding that they were opponents of Visconti, was a clever strategy. The Torriani were well loved by Milan's *populus*, whose fondness for their rule had long been a fixture of the faction's social memory (as suggested by texts like the *Chronica Danielis* and Goffredo da Bussero's Chronicle). Indeed, the *Manipulus Florum* suggests a certain inevitability to their political revolution, with Fiamma manipulating the dating of Lanzone's rebellion to set it in 1040 (as opposed to Landolfo Seniore's dating of 1039), thereby occurring exactly 200 years before Pagano della Torre's assumption of office in 1240. Similarly, Pagano's definitive repeal of the statutes *in odium populi* is dated to 1257 – precisely 200 years after their initial legislation in 1057. These bicenntenials represent fixed historical epochs, suggesting that the signoria's rebirth under the Torriani was prescribed by supernaturally ordained temporal cycles.[94]

One challenge remained for the *Manipulus Florum*, and that was to justify the Visconti's overthrow of the Torriani. This was a difficult operation, requiring careful consideration for the social memory of the *Manipulus Florum*'s audience among the *populus*. A deference to their social mindset explains why the text praises Martino della Torre as *magnus*, describes him as a man of great judgement and goodness, and provides a flattering genealogy for his house, tracing its ancestry to Frankish royalty.[95] The image of the regime, however, changes later in the text, once Ottone Visconti is named archbishop. Martino, who had wanted his brother to assume the office, refuses to allow Ottone to take his seat, and then "invaded the castles and lands of the church, for which reason Milan was placed under interdict."[96] His successors are made to appear intensely impious. Filippo della Torre befriends the *haereticus* Oberto Pallavicino and other enemies of the church.[97] Napoleone della Torre is

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[93] MF, pp. 686-88.
[94] For a more general discussion of the Christian understanding of history and time, see J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton, 1975), pp. 31-48.
[95] MF, p. 677 for Torriani genealogy. MF, p. 687: *Et istud fuit primum dominum magni Martini de la Turre*. MF, p. 692: *vir magni consilii, et magnae bonitatis*.
[96] MF, p. 692: *invasit Castra, et Terras Ecclesiae: propter quod Civitas Mediolanensis Ecclesiastico supponitur Interdicto.*
[97] MF, p. 693.

stigmatised for his *crudelis* regime, criticism based mainly on his abuse of ecclesiastics and his refusal to allow Ottone Visconti to enter Milan.[98] This line of attack condemns the Torriani for their failure to fulfil the duties of a proper signore (compare their behaviour to the *Manipulus Florum*'s idealised description of Milan's ancient ducal regime, which "responsibly protected the offices of the ecclesiastics and clerics").[99] The suggestion is that, by persecuting men of the cloth, the Torriani lost their mandate to rule (never mind that the Visconti were just as antagonistic to the church when they were in power). The invective relied on Fiamma's reading of an epic by Stefanardo da Vimercate, a San Eustorgio friar and elder contemporary of Fiamma's. His late 13th-century epic poem, the *Poema de Gestis*, is a panegyric to Ottone Visconti's defeat of the Torriani and his pacification of Milan.[100] One of the first texts serving to justify Visconti lordship, the *Poema* constitutes Fiamma's main source for the late 13th century.

The poem also influenced the *Manipulus Florum*'s last act of rhetorical gymnastics, which was to demonstrate that the Visconti were worthy champions of the *populares*. Much hinged, therefore, on how the *Manipulus Florum* depicted the battle of Desio in 1277, the event which initiated the downfall of the Torriani and the beginning of the Visconti signoria. Representing Desio had always been a tricky operation for the Visconti and their supporters. Historically, Ottone's victory had constituted a serious political setback for the *populus*, who did not regain power in the city until 1287, when the faction returned to political favour under the Visconti signoria.[101] For a regime that wanted either to court support from the *populus* or at least present itself as non-partisan, the trick was to downplay that the battle was a contest between factions and instead present it as a victory of fraternity over division, with Ottone Visconti portrayed as a peacemaker.[102] This is how the battle was officially commemorated. At the Visconti's castle at Angera, for instance, frescoes depicting the battle emphasise Ottone Visconti's mercy and his wide social support. Noteworthy are images of Ottone commanding the nobility not to harm *populares* and

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[98] MF, p. 696: *Ecclesiae spoliantur opes...publica res premitur, communia commoda verunt.*
[99] MF, p. 571: *Ecclesiarum et Clericorum honores integre servabat.*
[100] Stephanardus de Vimercato, "Poema de Gestis in Civitate Mediolani", in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 9 (Milan, 1726), p. 75. On Stefanardo, see G. Cremaschi, *Stefanardo da Vimercate: contributo per la storia della cultura in Lombardia nel sec. XIII* (Milan, 1950). S.A. Cengarle, "Stefanardo di Vimercate nelle cronache galvagnane", *Filologia mediolatina*, 16 (2009), pp. 247-95.
[101] Somaini, "Processi costitutivi", p. 692.
[102] Other signori behaved similarly. O. Capitani, "Dal comune alla signoria", *in Storia d'Italia*, 4 (Torino, 1981), pp. 153-4.

another of Ottone warmly received by the citizens and clergy of Milan after the battle.[103] The scenes derive from Stefanardo's epic.

Following suit, the *Manipulus Florum*'s Ottone is represented as an agent of peace rather than an agent of the nobility. The history makes this clear even before its account of Desio, when Ottone explains that his leadership of the noble faction was conditional on their disavowing their hatred of the *populares*. "The work of the archbishop is to show mercy, not to avenge", he explains. "I desire peace and to return the exiled to their homes. I want to be your [the nobility's] leader and *capitaneus*, provided that you give up wrath against your enemies and invoke divine aid."[104] A similar sentiment is communicated in the archbishop's speech after his victory at Desio, which calls for the nobility to restrain their bloodlust: "This victory is not ours, but the blessing of God. May no sword be unsheathed. May no one pillage the poor or rich. May no one suffer any injury or wound."[105]

In addition, the *Manipulus Florum* presents the *populares* as fundamentally supportive of Ottone's enterprise. We learn that when Cassono della Torre, after the defeat at Desio, beseeched the *populus* to raise arms to liberate his captured kin, he was rebuffed, with the *populus* instead choosing to send ambassadors to recall Ottone and the nobles to the city. Once Ottone enters Milan, he is acclaimed by all the clergy and all Milan's citizens, chanting *pax, pax*! Ottone is then alleged to have ennobled "the many populares that adhered [to him]", including the Castani, Rubei, and the Marcellini – all eminent families of the *populares*.[106] That this last detail was included specifically to indulge the *Manipulus Florum*'s audience among the *populus* is underscored by the fact that the *Galvagnana* omits it entirely. (Indeed, neither does it appear in Stefanardo.)

After its narrative for Desio, the *Manipulus Florum* concentrates on the fortunes of the Visconti and on significant political events like Henry VII's or Louis of Bavaria's Italian expeditions, thereby weaving factional memory into a standard

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[103] L.C. Vegas, "Gli affreschi della Rocca di Angera: problemi iconografici e cronologici", in G. Soldi Rondinini (ed.) *<<Fabularum patria>> Angera e il suo territorio nel Medioevo* (Bologna, 1988), pp. 91-4; P. Toesca, *La pittura e la miniatura nella Lombardia dai più antichi monumenti alla metà del Quattrocento* (Torino, 1912), pp. 80-7.

[104] MF, p. 702: *Opus archiepiscopi est parcere, non vindicare: exopto pacem, et proscriptos ad proprias domos reducere. Volo omnium vestrum esse Capitaneus, et ductor, dummodo deponatis iram contra inimicos, et divinum auxilium invocetis.*

[105] MF, p. 704.

[106] The Marcellini were especially influential, having led the faction in the mid 13th century. See Grillo, *Milano in età* comunale, pp. 338-41. P. Grillo, "Marcellino, Adrigotto" in *DBI*, 69 (2007).

narrative of the Visconti era. In the aggregate, what does the *Manipulus Florum* actually achieve? It first reflects the popular narrative found in the *Chronica Danielis*, imposing it onto the grand canvas of Milanese history. It therefore reaffirms and validates a social memory that represented the *populus* at the centre of Milan's political community, with the nobility portrayed as a predatory Other. Second, the text manages to anticipate the Visconti signoria through its representation of signorial regimes that functioned to protect the *populus* from the violence of the nobility. In that vein, the peacemaker Ottone Visconti is the successor to the dukes, Lanzone da Corte, and Pagano and Martino della Torre.[107] Considering this functionality, it is noteworthy that the text does not go to any significant lengths to portray the regimes of Matteo, Galeazzo, and Azzone Visconti as particularly benign to the *populus*. Perhaps it was enough that these Visconti were the successors of Ottone, rendering no further defence of the Visconti signoria necessary. Equally so, Fiamma would have wanted to carefully control the image of the Visconti. The *Manipulus Florum*, as a text meant for consumption by the *populares*, could vilify the nobility, but it had to limit the extent to which it presented the Visconti as uniquely one faction's partisans. That is because the signoria, though courting the support of the *populares*, still required the loyalty of the nobility, to whose social memory we now turn.

The *Galvagnana*

We direct our focus to the *Galvagnana*, specifically its edition in Ambrosiana 329inf. Although the Ambrosiana manuscript will be our focus, a preliminary analysis of other renderings of the text, especially the Braidense AX 10 and the text's incarnation in the *Annales Mediolani*, reveal a political language similarly favourable to the nobility.[108] Our conclusions about the Ambrosiana text are therefore broadly applicable, such that we can feel justified referring to it as the *Galvagnana*.

The *Galvagnana* is not simply a reverse image of the *Manipulus Florum*, aggrandising the nobility at the expense of the *populus*. The *populares* are not stigmatised by the text's narrative, nor does the text dispense entirely with a social

[107] F. Somaini, "Processi costitutivi", pp. 689-93.
[108] Milano: Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense MS AX 10, *Galvagnana*. See Braidense AX 10's narrative for Ambrose (c. 115), Lanzone da Corte (c. 242), Ottone Visconti's agreement to lead the nobility (c. 354) , and Desio (c. 356). The *Annales Mediolani*'s narrative for 1230 to about 1320 is more or less identical to the Ambrosiana's and Braidense's. See "Annales Mediolanenses", in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 16 (Milan, 1730), pp. 641-714, and footnote 8 above for the differences between the versions.

memory of noble persecution. What the *Galvagnana* does do, however, is moderate criticism of the nobility and – more importantly – afford the faction a legitimate role in the politics of Milan. The text also carries content intended to indulge the interests of a noble readership.

A few examples will suffice to illustrate the change in discourse. Apart from an altogether less incriminating rendering of Lanzone's rebellion, which absolves the nobility of blame for the outbreak of urban violence in the 11th century and even identifies the faction as peacemakers (see above), there are several excursus honouring noble families – specifically, Guglielmo da Pusterla and Umberto della Croce – that have no analogue in the *Manipulus Florum*.[109] Another chapter on the question *Which is the more noble family of Milan?* broaches a subject predominantely of interest to a noble readership (the answer, incidentally, is the da Soresina, a family that supposedly produced two emperors and a pope; the Crivelli [who did have a pope] are runners-up for their wealth and political influence).[110] The text could be defensive of the nobility, too. Milan's *populares* had long criticised the faction for their alliances with Ezzelino da Romano and Oberto Pallavicino, which they had made while exiled from Milan in the 13th century.[111] But the *Galvagnana*, channelling its counter-argument through a speech by no less an authority than Ottone Visconti, ripostes that the alliances were ones made of necessity, not conviction. "The nobles did not adhere to error, but to power", Ottone explains, "wanting to return to their homes, if they could." [112] True to form, the *Manipulus Florum* offers no such apology. Additional authority to the text is lent by Fiamma's claim that his own family was ennobled as *capitanei* by the Emperor Henry VII, a biographic detail judiciously omitted from the *Manipulus Florum*.[113]

To be sure, the statutes *in odium populi* reappear here, reminding the reader of the urban nobility's proclivity to abuse their power. The *Galvagnana*, however, lessens the statutes' significance in its grand narrative. They are created not in the aftermath of Lanzone's rebellion but around the 9th century, under the noble-

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[109] GA, p. 358-61: *De privilegiis Guilielmi de Pusterla*; GA, p. 391-2: *De Uberto de la Cruce et filia eius*.
[110] GA, pp. 402-3: *Quod Papa intravit Mediolanum, et de questione, quae esset nobilior parentela de Mediolani.*
[111] MF, pp. 695. These complaints first appear in Stefanardo, "Poema", p. 72.
[112] GA, p. 429: *Dictum est hic, quod pars Nobilium de Mediolani fuerunt amici duroum hareticorum, scilicet Izilini et Uberti Pelavicini. Ego [Otto] respondeo, quod non adhaeserunt errori, sed potentiae, volentes per ipsos domum redire, si potuissent.*
[113] GA, p. 692.

controlled consulate. Because the *populares* immediately react by forming the tribune/credenza to overturn the laws, the text implies that the statutes had but a brief impact.[114] They fade out of the narrative, to be mentioned only once more when they are re-issued centuries later by Barbarossa upon his conquest of Milan in 1162 (a narrative element taken from the *Chronica Danielis*). But even here, their impact is negligible, since they are nullified once the commune is restored a few years later.[115] Their short lifespan, as well as their total absence from the text's account of the 13th century, mean that the statutes no longer function to underpin a narrative that represents the *populares* as the perennially oppressed. To the contrary, the *Galvagnana* suggests that, once the *credenza* is formed, the *populares* are able to give as good as they get, alleging "that the [*credenza*] easily crushed the nobles".[116] That the statutes appear at all in the *Galvagnana* nevertheless does demonstrate an effort by the text to juggle a narrative sympathetic to the nobles with at least some vestige of the social memory of the *populares*.

The most important feature of the *Galvagnana* is that it represents the nobility as legitimate creatures of the political life of the city. It is a position that clearly separates the text from its predecessor. The *Manipulus Florum* is consistently disdainful of the faction, subscribing to the argument made so often by Italy's intellectual class (Dante included) that "everyone is born from Adam equal by nature", and that insofar as nobility exists, it is a function of *virtus*, not birth.[117] The *Galvagnana*, however, takes a different tack, acknowledging that nobility was a form of privileged vassalage that bound the recipient to a superior political authority (in Milan, generally the archbishop), was something inherited, and had both legal and venerable origins in the history of the city.[118] The text treats nobility as a privileged social group – a faction in itself – and, by identifying particular families as nobles,

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[114] GA, p. 235.
[115] GA, pp. 329-330.
[116] GA, p. 235: *...quod contra nobiles faciliter [the Credenza] recalcarent*.
[117] MF, p. 677: *hoc enim certum est quoniam omnes ex Adam natu sumus natura pares, licet corporis, vel animi virtus aliquos fecerit nobiliores.* On the idea of nobility, see C. Donati, *L'idea di nobiltà in Italia: secoli XIV-XVIII* (Rome-Bari, 1988), pp. 3-17. G. Castelnuovo, "L'identità politica delle nobilità cittadine", in R. Bordone, G. Castelnuovo, and G.M. Varanini (eds.) *Le aristocrazie dai signori rurali al patriziato* (Roma-Bari, 2004), pp. 219-20. Also see Dante Alighieri, *Il Convivio*, edited by Maria Simonelli (Bologna, 1966), b. 4, c. 20.
[118] On nobility and vassalage to the church, see H. Keller, *Signori e vassalli nell'Italia delle città* (secoli IX-XII) (Torino, 1995), pp. 103-4. For a comparison of Milan's nobility and the nobility of other Italian localities, see Grillo, *Milano in età comunale*, pp. 238-47. Also see A. Degrandi, "Vassalli cittadini e vassalli rurali nel Vercellese del XII secolo" in *Bollettino storico bibliografico subalpino*, 91 (1993): 5-45 and R. Bordone, "Il movimento comunale: le istituzioni cittadine e la composizione sociale durante il XII secolo", in G. Sergi (ed.) *Storia di Torino*, 1 (Torino, 1997), pp. 607-56.

contributed to an on-going debate over who in Milan could legitimately claim a noble lineage. (The authority of a civic history naturally served as an important arbiter in this discussion; to be named in Milan's *matricula* of nobles, however, was the best way to validate one's claim to noble status.)[119] The *Galvagnana*'s nobles are seemingly present from the very foundation of Milan, though many of the city's more eminent noble families are alleged to have migrated from Rome as part of the entourage of Saint Ambrose.[120]

This connection to Milan's patron saint is highly relevant to the faction's identity. The archbishop is shown to be responsible for creating Milan's first *capitanei portarum*, a grade of social status that served as the highest indication of nobility, bequeathing its members with *nobilitates* and *iura*.[121] These privileges go undefined by the *Galvagnana*, but it seems that the text meant them to imply some form of military authority. The *Galvagnana* tells us that Saint Ambrose first installed *capitanei* in Milan's gates to assist the city's dukes in their war against the Arian population (according to the text, ancient Milan had been divided between Arians and Catholics, who fought each other like Guelphs and Ghibellines).[122] Though obviously apocryphal, the story is probably meant to evoke the traditional responsibility of the *capitanei portarum* to field armies for the defence of the city.[123]

Curiously, other origin stories follow. *Valvassori* appear as dependents of the *capitanei*, who give these *valvassori* some of the benefices received from Milan's dukes.[124] Alionus, a Lombard king and a count of Angleria, is said to have created additional *cattanei* (a variant spelling of *capitanei*) and *valvassori*, "who all were vassals of the church".[125] A couple of archbishops, Valperto and Ariberto, are also credited with creating *capitanei portarum*, who are invested with the same six gates that Ambrose had previously invested other noble families; what might appear to be a narrative contradiction is explained as follows: the *capitanei portarum*, "by defect of offspring or because their dignitaties had been lost", were over the course of Milan's

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[119] See L. Bessozzi, "Matricula della famiglie nobili di Milano", *ASL*, 110 (1984).
[120] GA, p. 112.
[121] On the initial creation of the *capitani*, see GA, pp. 117-118. Though Fiamma does not list the *iura* of the *capitani*, he does clarify that they did not include rights over the gates: *Ex hoc dicti sunt Capitanei portarum, non quod in portis civitatis aliquod ius haberent, sed sic dicti sunt, quia ex portis electi sunt.*
[122] GA, p. 114.
[123] On the social organisation of *capitanei* and *valvassores* in the 12th century, see Grillo, *Milano in età comunale*, pp. 471-44. On the military responsibilities of the *portae*, see ibid. pp 485, 488.
[124] GA, p. 117.
[125] GA, pp. 137-8: *qui omnes erant vassalli ecclesiae*.

history replaced with other families.[126] Though this explanation might explain why one or two gates might occasionally require new investitures, it does not account adequately for why later archbishops should have invested new families in all six of Milan's gates. We are inclined to conclude that the different narratives are just a clumsy attempt by Fiamma to accommodate the social memories of a wide variety of noble families, each of whom would have wished to boast descent from the venerable *capitanei portarum*. Ultimately, what is important is that each of these origin stories identify Milan's urban *capitanei* as the creation of Milan's archbishops. The one exception is the claim that Alionus, the Lombard king and count of Angleria, also created *cattanei*. Since the Visconti claimed descent from Alionus, the implication is that Milan's nobility also owed their social grade to the patronge of the Visconti house (clearly a useful device for justifying its lordship). Even in this origin story, however, Milan's church is linked to the creation of the *cattanei*, who are said to have served as its vassals. In all cases, the *Galvagnana* thus functions to tie the legitimacy of the *Galvagnana*'s nobility to the legitimacy of the Ambrosian church itself.

That said, it should be noted that the *Galvagnana*'s positive representation of the nobility is restricted only to their urban-dwelling members. This programme becomes particularly evident upon analysis of how the *Galvagnana* treats the investitures of Archbishop Landolfo, one of the villains of the *Manipulus Florum*, who – in that text – is held responsible for the creation of Milan's *capitanei portarum* from a corrupt investiture of ecclesiastical lands. [127] In the *Galvagnana*, too, *capitanei* are created from Landolfo's corrupt investiture, but these creations are *not* identified with Milan's *capitanei portarum*. The relevant passage from the text is worth quoting:

> And they were called *capitanei* – that is, heads of the parishes, of the hospices, or of the towns – who are now in the vernacular called *catanei*. And then all these *capitanei*, having left the city, inhabiting their lands and nobilities, never again were good inhabitants of the city. And henceforth they did not consider themselves *cives* and they did not obey the community. And thus the city was weakened greatly.[128]

The passage introduces us to a new variety of *capitanei*, the rural *capitanei*, who are alone associated with the toxic memory and scandal of Landolfo's "corrupt

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[126] GA, p. 118-119: *ex defectu prolis aut dignitatibus privatis*,
[127] MF, p. 611.
[128] GA, p. 249: *Et isti dicti sunt capitani, idest plebium, vel hospitalium, vel oppidorum capita, que nunc corrupto vocabulo dicti sunt catanei. Ex tunc omnes isti capitani derelicta civitate, terras, et nobilitates suas inhabitantes, nunquam de cetero beni fuerunt civitatis habitatores. Unde se cives non reputabant, comunitati non obediebant. Et sic civitas fuit quamplurimum debilitata.* The *Manipulus Florum contains* a similar passage about the rural *capitanei*, but in reference to an investiture by Archbishop Arnulphus. (MF, p. 611).

investiture". The legitimacy of the urban *capitanei*, meanwhile, remains unimpeachable. The passage notes that the creation of the rural *capitanei* weakened the city greatly. On other occasions, too, the *Galvagnana* identifies threats to the city as originating from this rural group.[129] (The rhetoric was politically useful in the 1330s, when the Visconti were attempting to re-conquer the contado and curtail the prerogatives of its rural lords. [130])

Much of the *Galvagnana*'s narrative, nevertheless, focuses on exclusively urban events, treating in detail the history of conflict between the nobility and *populus*, conflict which lasts until the advent of the Visconti.[131] How the *Galvagnana* describes these political divisions serves to highlight the nobility's unique relationship with the city's archbishops. The *Galvagnana* stresses that, whenever Milan is divided, the archbishop aligns with the nobles, suggesting (with some degree of historical basis) that the nobility and church were of one party.[132] At the end of the 12th century, when Milan splits into *quattuor regimina*, the *Galvagnana* records that it is the nobles who are allied with the archbishop Filippo Lampugnano.[133] In 1219, with civil war raging, the archbishop Enrico is made *caput Cathaneorum et Valvassorum* and plays a leading role in creating a peace that allowed the nobility, briefly exiled, to return to Milan in 1225.[134] And then in 1240, the archbishop Leone is made the faction's leader, supporting them in their struggle against the *populares*. Archbishop Ottone Visconti is the last in this series of patrons of the nobility. These associations with the church distinguish the *Galvagnana* from the *Manipulus Florum*, which omits reference to the fact that either Archbishop Filippo Lampugnano or Archbishop

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[129] This can be appreciated, above all, in the text's account of the traitors who supported Barbarossa in his war against Milan, which omits from its list several important urban noble families that were included in the *Chronica Danielis*'s list. A full prosopography of each listed family, however, is necessary before making any specific conclusions (and this task we leave to a future study). See GA, pp. 313-317.

[130] A. Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo. Linguagi politici e dinamiche costituzionali* (Milan, 2005), pp. 186-91.

[131] The *Galvagnana* identifies four (really five) regimes for Milan. From the beginning of the commune to the time of the Roman Prince Marcellus, Milan had a *regimen magis barbaricum quam politicum* as a consequence of the continuous invasions of the city. From Marcellus to Ambrose, two consuls ruled. From Ambrose to Charlemagne, a single duke ruled. The fourth regime, from Charlemagne to Frederick II, entailed government by 12 *consules*, the *credenza*, and the archbishop. Fiamma also adds (perhaps intended as a fifth regime) that from Barbarossa to the present, Milan was ruled by *potestates*. GA, pp. 232-33.

[132] On the church as a local political party, see L. Fasola, "Vescovi, città e signorie (secc VIII ex. - XV)", in A. Caprioli, A. Rimoldi, and L. Vaccaro (eds.) *Chiesa e società: Appunti per una storia delle diocesi lombarde* (Brescia, 1986), p. 117.

[133] GA, p. 351.

[134] GA, pp. 370-4.

Enrico were leaders of the nobility. And while the *Manipulus Florum* does acknowledge the leadership of Archbishop Leone and Archbishop Ottone over the faction, it does so in a way that diminishes its particular significance. In the *Manipulus Florum*, Archbishop Leone is uniquely made to appear as something like a warlord, who makes bloody threats to his followers and provokes *multi turbationes* in the city – details that poison the memory of his association with the nobility.[135] The *Manipulus Florum*'s Ottone, as previously noted, is described with language that renders him less a leader of the nobility than a peacemaker for all factions. We will discuss the particulars of the *Galvagnana*'s representation of Ottone's leadership later. For now, it is enough to say that the *Galvagnana*, unlike the *Manipulus Florum*, was not averse to describing *Ottone*'s leadership of the nobles in partisan terms.

Now that we have made a case for the *Galvagnana*'s distinct representation of the nobility, we must determine functionality. That the *Galvagnana* goes to such lengths to stress the nobility's relationship to the church is significant for two reasons. First, this relationship was clearly an important part of the nobility's own identity, which was rooted in the faction's traditional control of ecclesiastical offices in the city and contado, control epitomised above all by their monopoly of the city's cathedral chapter.[136] Access to these institutions constituted the nobility's primary mechanism for the exercise of political power, since over the course of the Duecento the faction had gradually lost control over Milan's other administrative organs, particularly in local parishes and urban districts.[137] The privilege was all the more jealously guarded in the context of efforts by the *populus*, who already controlled the *decumani* of the Ambrosian church, to use their political influence to ban the nobility from the cathedral chapter, which they succeeded in doing in 1225 and 1258.[138] Although the nobility's expulsion from the chapter lasted only as long as their exile from Milan itself (Ottone Visconti, after Desio, nullified the *populus*'s prohibition and then even prevented the *populares* from becoming archpriests, archdeacons, and *ordinarii*), their

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[135] MF, p. 682.
[136] J. Koenig, *Il "popolo" dell'Italia del Nord nel XIII secolo* (Bologna, 1986), p. 116. Bessozzi, "Matricula della famiglie nobili".
[137] Grillo, *Milano in età comunale*, pp. 258-66. For a discussion of the relationship between nobility and access to the cathedral chaper, see A. Gamberini, "La nobiltà del pastore. Una nota sui processi di formalizzazione di status nel Trecento", in M.N. Covini, M. Della Misericordia, A. Gamberini, and F. Somaini (eds.) *Medioevo dei poteri* (Roma, 2012), pp. 78-86.
[138] For an overview of the conflict, see A. Rigon, "Il ruolo delle chiese locali nelle lotte tra magnati e popolani" in *Magnati e popolani nell'Italia comunale* (Pistoia, 1997), pp. 119-121; G. Franceschini, "La vita sociale e politica nel Duecento", in *Storia di Milano*, 4, pp. 288-9.

control of the chapter still required some form of political rationalisation.[139] The memory of the nobility's relationship with Ambrose and his successors was, in this regard, an essential polemical tool, functioning to justify the nobility's privileged status in the hierarchy of church administration. The success of this programme is attested to by Milan's *matricula* – that is, the official document prescribing who were allowed to hold office in the cathedral chapter – which reveals that men of predominately noble origin retained control of the Ambrosian church throughout the Visconti period (and, indeed, beyond). [140]

By remembering the nobility's ancient relationship with the Ambrosian church, the *Galvagnana* also functioned to demonstrate the basis for the faction's intimate relationship with the Visconti. The Visconti had represented themselves as the heirs of Milan's plenipotentiary archbishops**,** who ruled the city as spiritual and temporal lords from Saint Ambrose up to the advent of the consulate in the 12th century. Various iconographic strategies linked the Visconti to this history. Coins minted by the regime bore the image of Saint Ambrose. The tomb of Ottone Visconti was made to resemble the sarcophagi of the archbishops Ambrose and Ariberto. Azzone's own tomb was engraved with the image of Saint Ambrose, flanked by iconography which suggested the archbishop was one of several sources of Azzone's temporal authority.[141]

Since the reign of Archbishop Ottone, the Visconti had increasingly acted as *de facto* heads of the church, too, exploiting it as a source both of wealth and legitimacy. Azzone frequently led religious processions.[142] From at least 1330, Giovanni Visconti claimed control over the revenues of the archbishopric, and from 1332 was recognized by the pope as its effective governor, so long as he paid a pension to the exiled Archbishop Aicardo. How Giovanni's unofficial lordship of the Ambrosian church might have been described is suggested by the *Opusculum*, which

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[139] E. Cattaneo, "Ottone Visconti archievescovo di Milano" in *Contributi dell'istituto di storia medioevale*, I (1968), pp. 159-163. E. Cattaneo, "Gli statuti del Capitolo della Cattedrale di Milano", in *Ambrosiana*, 3 (1952), p. 111.

[140] Bessozi, "Matricula della famliglie nobili", pp. 274-8. Not that this mattered much, given that the Visconti signoria effectively controlled the election of archbishop, expropriating the cathedral chapter's right to do so. (Indeed, membership of the cathedral chapter was significant mostly as a mechanism for signalling nobility.) See G. Soldi Rondinini, "Vescovi e signori nel Trecento: i casi di Milano, Como, Brescia", in G. De Sandre Gasparini, A. Rigon, F. Trolese, and G.M. Varanini (eds.) *Vescovi e diocesi in Italia dal XIV alla metà del XVI secolo*, in *Italia Sacra*, 44/2 (Rome, 1990), pp. 846-7.

[141] G. Cariboni, "Comunicazione simbolica e identità cittadina a Milano presso i primi Visconti (1277-1254)", *Reti Medievali Rivista*, 9 (2008), pp. 13, 25.

[142] G. Cadili, *Giovanni Visconti arcivescovo di Milano (1342-1354)* (Milan, 2007), pp. 80-88.

calls him "Giovanni bishop of Novara governing the archbishopric in place of Aicardo archbishop of Milan" or "Giovanni governing the Milanese church in place of the archbishop Aicardo".[143] Both titles effectively identify him as the *de facto* archbishop, despite the fact that he was not officially appointed to the office until 1342. The Visconti's claim to the Ambrosian patrimony might also have been aided by their family name, *vicecomes*, a title typically given to vassals of the archbishop. The meaning of the name is noted in the *Galvagnana*, which also identifies an Uberto Visconti as a vassal of Saint Ambrose.[144]

This context – of a regime that rooted its legitimacy in an association with Milan's ecclesiastical institutions and spiritual iconography – reframes the meaning of the social memory captured by the *Galvagnana*. The nobility's identification with the church was an identification with the Visconti.

Much hinged, therefore, on the *Galvagnana*'s portrayal of Archbishop Ottone Visconti, whose career encapsulated this convergence between Milan's church and the Visconti.[145] Crucially, the archbishop had also been the nobility's leader during their exile from Milan in the 13th century. The *Manipulus Florum* tries to cover up or diminish the significance of this fact, while the *Galvagnana* places it centre stage. For instance, in its chapter headings for the late Duecento, the *Galvagnana* tethers Ottone's exile with the nobility's: *exulante Ottone Archiepiscopo cum parte Nobilium*. The *Manipulus Florum*'s headings, however, disassociate Ottone from the faction, merely stating: *exulante Otto Archiepiscopo*.[146] The *Galvagnana* observes that, in 1267, 1268, and 1272, Ottone advocated in front of the papal curia that the exiled nobility be allowed to return to Milan. The *Manipulus Florum*, by contrast, does not

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[143] Bicaro, "Le relazioni", pp. 155, 178-9; Cadili, *Giovanni Visconti*, p. 101. Galvano Fiamma, "Opusculum de rebus gestis ab Azone, Luchino et Iohanne, vicecomitibus ab a. 1328 ad a. 1342", in C. Castiglioni (ed.) *RIS*, 12/4 (Bologna, 1938), pp. 22, 24: *Iohannis episcopus Novariensis gubernans archiepiscopatum in loco fratris Aycardi archiepiscopi mediolanensis*; *gubernans ecclesiam Mediolanensem loco fratris Aycardi archiepiscopi*.

[144] R. Bordone, "I visconti cittadini in età comunale" in *Formazione e strutture dei ceti dominanti nel medioevo: marchesi, conti e visconti nel regno italico*, 2 (Rome, 1996). Also see GA, p. 114, which tells the story of the viscount of Saint Ambrose, Uberto Visconti, who slayed a dragon.

[145] On the urban nobility's support for Ottone Visconti, see Somaini, "Processi costitutivi", pp. 686-7. Somaini's argument is that the Visconti's war with the Torriani was a civil war between Milan's urban factions, rather than a war between city and countryside. The counter argument comes from: D. Waley, *Le città-repubblica dell'Italia medievale* (Torino, 1980), pp. 186-94; P. Jones, "Economia e società nell'Italia medievale: la leggenda della borghesia", in R. Romano and C. Vivanti (eds.) *Storia d'Italia - Annali, I, Dal fuedalismo al capitalismo* (Torino, 1978), pp. 291-308. (Both cited in Somaini.)

[146] MF, pp. 693-7, 700, 703. (chapters: ccc, ccci, cccii, ccciii, ccciv, cccix, cccxi, cccxii, cccxiii); GA, pp. 428, 431, 434, 437, 444.

mention his advocacy.[147] The most revealing difference between the two texts lies in how they explain Ottone's decision in 1275 to officially lead the noble faction. Though we have already touched on the *Manipulus Florum*'s narrative of this episode, it is worth replicating the passage here, but with fuller context. Here is the *Manipulus Florum*'s narrative:

> At last Archbishop Ottone, leaving from Bugella, came to Vercelli. There the entire noble party came to him, asking whether it would please him to be the head and lord of the nobles, reminding him to remember the death of Count Gottfredo Languscho and the death of the aforementioned Tibald, his nephew, and the deaths of others killed in Gallarate and the desires of the knights and that almost 200 nobles were killed in several battles. To this Archbishop Ottone piously and strictly responded, saying: "The work of the archbishop is to show mercy, not to avenge. I desire peace and to return the exiled to their homes. I want to be your leader and captain, provided that you give up wrath against your enemies and invoke divine aid."[148]

Ottone rejects the nobility's argument that the deaths of Count Gottfredo Languscho, his nephew Tibald, and so many other nobles should be his motivation for leading the nobility. As an agent of peace, not vengeance, Ottone makes his lordship conditional on the nobility rejecting their factional animosity toward the *populares*. Now consider how differently this narrative is rendered in the *Galvagnana*:

> At the same time the noble party made its head and lord Archbishop Ottone. When Ottone [had] refused, the nobles alleged many reasons why he should accept, such as vengeance for his nephew Tibald, who was decapitated in Gallarate, and vengeance for the *capitanei* and *valvassori*, since more than 200 had perished in various battles, and love for his church, which he could never see. Many other reasons were also given. Finally, the archbishop consented.[149]

This is an entirely different tone. Whereas the *Manipulus Florum*'s Ottone had rejected vengeance as a reason for assuming lordship of the nobility, the *Galvagnana*'s Ottone appears persuaded by this rationalisation. Also mentioned in the *Galvagnana* – and not in the *Manipulus Florum* – is Ottone's *amor suae Ecclesiae*,

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[147] GA, pp. 428-31 (for 1267), 431-34, (for 1268), 437 (for 1272).

[148] MF, p. 702: *Tandem Otto Archiepiscopus de Bugella exiens venit Vercellas. Ad quem tota pars Nobilium perrexit, rogans eum, quatenus Nobilium caput, et Dominus esse placeret, reducentes ei ad memoriam mortem Comitis Gothfredi de Languscho et mortem Tibaldi supradicti nepotis sui, nec non mortes aliorum in Gallarate interfectorum, et desiderium Militum proscriptorum, et quod in pluribus bellis interfecti fuerant fere ducenti ex Nobilibus. Ad haec Otto Archiepiscopus pie et districte respondit dicens: "Opus archiepiscopi est parcere, non vindicare: exopto pacem, et proscriptos ad proprias domos reducere. Volo omnium vestrum esse Capitaneus, et ductor, dummodo deponatis iram contra inimicos, et divinum auxilium invocetis."*

[149] GA, p. 442: *Eodem tempore pars Nobilium fecit suum caput et dominum, Archiepiscopum Ottonem, qui cum renueret, multas allegaverunt causas, quare recipere debebat. Quibus propter ultionem Tibaldi nepotis sui, que fuerat in Galerate decollatus; item propter ultionem Cataneorum et Valvasorum, quia plusquam CC gladio perierunt in diversis proeliis; item propter amorem suae Ecclesiae, quam numquam videre potuit; et plura talia allagata sunt. Finaliter Archiepiscopus consensit.*

reminding us of the Visconti and nobility's shared committment to defending the Ambrosian church. Finally, the absence of the *Manipulus Florum*'s language of mercy and forgiveness is also conspicuous, rendering Ottone a far more factional figure.

The *Galvagnana*'s Ottone is clearly the nobility's partisan. This is the genius of the text. By interweaving a narrative about the nobility's traditional relationship with the church with a narrative about Archbishop Ottone's leadership of the faction, the text absorbs the nobility into the Visconti signoria, whose lordship is legitimated by the memory of Ottone's own intimate relationship with the nobility.

This does not mean that the *Galvagnana* declines to appropriate Stefanardo's more neutral representation of Ottone after the battle of Desio, which – as we have seen – stresses Ottone's magnanimity in victory. The *Galvagnana* relates that Ottone spared many of his enemies and sought reconciliation with the *populares*. As in the *Manipulus Florum*, the *Galvagnana*'s Ottone is also represented as an impartial peacemaker. But this does not invalidate the text's earlier, more partisan portrayal of the archbishop. Both facets of Ottone's lordship are represented in the *Galvagnana*'s narrative.

All this is well and good. But how, then, could the *Galvagnana* explain the nobility's troubled relationship with the signoria over the next few decades, a period that witnessed multiple conspiracies against the Visconti and even open revolt?[150] Different sources give different impressions of the frequency of insurrection, with some form of conflict reported in 1311, 1322, 1324, and 1327. The *Galvagnana* deftly manages its representation of these events, using a variety of different strategies. We will again compare the text with the *Manipulus Florum* (and, in one instance, Cermenate's *Historia*) to appreciate its unique handling of the problem.

Consider the events of 1311. By this date, the Visconti were back in Milan (following their exile in 1302), though it was the Luxemburger king and soon-emperor Henry VII who was in control of the city.[151] Fiamma's source material, Cermenate, explains that Milan's Ghibelline magnates were envious and fearful of the Visconti, and so conspired to convince Henry to expel them from the city. Here is the relevant passage:

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[150] F. Cengarle, "La signoria di Azzone Visconti: tra prassi, retorica e iconografia (1329-1339)", in M. Vallerani (ed.) *Tecniche di potere nel tardo Medioevo. Regimi comunali e signorie in Italia* (Rome, 2010), pp. 92-6.

[151] On Henry VII's expedition to Italy, see W. Bowsky, *Henry VII in Italy: the conflict of empire and city-state, 1310-1313* (Lincoln, 1960).

After a few days, by order of the king, Matteo went to exile in Asti and his son, Galeazzo, in Treviso. In truth the envy and fear of many harmed them greatly, whose growing power was the cause of either great hatred or fear among the Ghibelline magnates.[152]

Cermenate employs a party idiom (the Ghibellines) that is infrequently used by Fiamma. Although Milan's Ghibelline party mostly drew its membership from the city's nobility, Milan's nobility and its Ghibellines are by no means identical communities. Cermenate's passage, as it is worded, is thus only subtly antagonistic toward the nobility. Perhaps this is why the *Manipulus Florum* reframes its vocabularly to suit the text's factional perspective:

Certain members of the nobles were so moved by envy that they pressed the emperor to send Matteo to the borders in Asti and Galeazzo to Treviso, (both of) whom, however, he recalled after a few days.[153]

Once again, the *Manipulus Florum* rewrites Cermenate to expose the perfidy of, specifically, Milan's nobility. The *Galvagnana,* however*,* eschews Cermenate's and the *Manipulus Florum*'s account to reinterpret events entirely, shifting blame for the Visconti's exile entirely onto Guido della Torre.

The emperor, wanting to satisfy Guido della Torre, sent Matteo Visconti to the borders in Asti and Galeazzo, his son, similarly to the borders in Treviso.[154]

This is not the only instance of the *Galvagnana* whitewashing its narrative to exculpate the nobility. In 1327, the text omits the *Manipulus Florum*'s accusations that the nobility conspired to give Cangrande della Scala dominion of Milan and that it was the nobility that encouraged Louis of Bavaria to overthrow Galeazzo Visconti.[155] The only detail in the *Galvagnana* that might seem detrimental to the faction's reputation (or, at least, certain of its members) is its acknowledgement that Louis of Bavaria had appointed the nobles Francesco Visconti, Ottone Burro, Ramengo Casate, and Belino Petrasancta as governors of Milan in Galeazzo's place.[156] This passage is still not as damning to the reputation of the nobility as its

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[152] Cermenate, *Historia*, p. 63: *Nam post paucos dies Matteus in Ast, Galeaz filius eius Tarvisium, iussu regis, in exilium pergunt. Verum sibi plurimum nocuit invidia atque plurimorum pavor, et magnatibus Gibellinis, quibus sua crescens potentia aut odiosa nimis aut pavoris causa fuit*.
[153] MF, p. 721: *Nam quidam ex Nobilibus invidia moti tantum institerunt Imperatori, quod Matthaeus ad confinia mittitur in Ast, et Galeaz Trivisium quos tamen post paucos dies revocavit*.
[154] GA, p. 477: *Tunc Imperator volens Guidoni della Turre satisfacere, misit Matthaeum Vicecomitem ad confinia in Asti, et Galeazium filium eius misit Tarvisium similiter ad confinia.*
[155] MF, p. 731.
[156] GA, pp. 497-8.

rendering in the *Manipulus Florum*, which uniquely alleges that these nobles ruled "in hatred of Galeazzo" (*in odium Galeaz*).[157]

We now need only consider the *Galvagnana*'s narrative for the early 1320s, a particularly complicated period for Visconti-noble relations. In 1322, several prominent nobles attempted to negotiate a truce with the papal legate, who had been leading a crusade against the Visconti since late 1321, as a consequence of Matteo Visconti's refusal to abdicate his lordship of Milan.[158] After the death of Matteo in 1322, the nobility defected to the legate, orchestrating a coup in Milan that temporarily removed Matteo's successor Galeazzo from office. Hereafter, much of the nobility left the city to fight for the papacy, violently clashing with Visconti loyalists at Caravazio in 1324.

The basic politics of the situation presented a problem for the *Galvagnana*, which had to negotiate between emphasising the nobility's devotion to the church and associating the nobility with the Visconti regime. The *Galvagnana* attempts to overcome the contradiction by sacrificing the reputation of Galeazzo Visconti and by portraying the nobility not as enemies of the Visconti signoria but as agents of peace. This intention clearly appears in the text's narrative for early 1322, in which a delegation of nobles are said to have brokered terms for *pax et concordia* between the Visconti and the pope, terms which were broadly acceptable to Matteo Visconti, who is said to have earnestly wanted to satisfy the church (*volens satisfacere ecclesiae)* and is shown publicly confessing the articles of the catholic faith in front of Milan's clergy and *universitas populi*. Matteo requests only that he not be required to supplicate for forgiveness from the pope at Avignon. Before the nobles could negotiate better *pacta*, however, Matteo dies, with Galeazzo succeeding him. Galeazzo is alleged to have "refused obedience to the church" (*Galeaz ecclesaie obedire contempsit*), thus making the continuation of war inevitable.[159] It is therefore Galeazzo's intransigence, not the nobility's infidelity, that is ultimately to blame for their defection to the church.

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[157] MF, p. 732.
[158] R. Michel, "Le Procès de Matteo et de Galeaz Visconti", *Mélanges*, 39 (1909), pp. 307-26. N. Housley, *The Italian Crusades: The Papal-Angevin Alliance and the Crusades against Christian Law Powers, 1254-1343* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 26-7.
[159] For Matteo's declaration of faith, see GA, p. 490: *Tunc Matheus Vicecomes convocato clero et universitate populi in ecclesia publice confessus est omnes articulos fidei, et purgavit se quod nunquam fuisset haereticus*. For Galeazzo's contempt, GA, p. 491.

This is a narrative that is altogether more sympathetic to the nobility than that of the *Manipulus Florum*, which does not credit the nobility with nearly negotiating a peace between Matteo and the papacy in 1322 and also does not identify Galeazzo's intransigence as the reason for the breakdown of peace negotiations.[160]

The remainder of the *Galvagnana*'s narrative attempts to compensate for the nobility's break in relations with Galeazzo Visconti by stressing the faction's cooperation with other members of the signoria. The text, for instance, describes how the nobility, aided by Vercellino Visconti (a minor member of the dynasty), played a leading role in reconciling Milan with the church in the 1330s, putting the signoria on the path that would see the end of the interdict and the revocation of the Visconti's excommunications.[161] This is a narrative that is unique to the *Galvagnana*, appearing neither in the *Manipulus Florum* or *Opusculum*. The text also ends on a happy note for noble-Visconti relations, when it uniquely describes in its entry for 1338 that Azzone Visconti knighted two leading nobles, Francesco Pusterla and Pinallo Aliprando, for their service to the regime.[162]

So what does the *Galvagnana* achieve? Beyond a doubt, it is kinder to the nobility than the *Manipulus Florum*, recognizing that nobles were legitimate political actors and providing a historical basis for their special relationship with the church, with implications for the nobility's right to monopolise the cathedral chapter. The emphasis on issues relevant to the faction and the text's consistent attempts to portray the nobility favourably (especially as compared to the *Manipulus Florum*'s negative representation) all indicate an intended audience of nobles. With that audience in mind, the *Galvagnana* uses its narrative to make an argument for the bonds that tied the nobility to the Visconti. The text's representation of Ottone Visconti is integral to this function, showing how the Visconti could serve the faction much as other archbishops had done in the past. But perhaps what is most interesting about the text is its willingness to continually affirm the nobility's loyalty toward the church, even as the church and Visconti were at war in the 1320s. No doubt a significant degree of the Dominican friar's own feelings can be discerned in this narrative, particularly when he castigates Galeazzo for his refusal to make peace with the papacy. By the text's

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[160] GA, pp. 492-6: *Omnes fere nobiles de Mediolano et precipue Gibilini contra Galeazium eabant extra Civitatem in servitium Ecclesie*.
[161] GA, p. 502.
[162] GA, p. 511: *Azo Vicecomes duos milites accinxit, scilicet Franciscum de Pusterla, et Pinallam de Aliprandis.*

closing, of course, none of this matters. The Visconti and the nobility act in concert to placate the papacy, and Milan is again at peace (again, the political role of the nobility is validated by the *Galvagnana*'s narrative).

The *Chronicon Maius*

So far, we have confronted texts with more or less overtly partisan interpretations of Milanese history. As we navigate through the textual landscape of the final history, the *Chronicon Maius*, we experience a thought world noticeably different from the perspectives of the *Manipulus Florum* or *Galvagnana*. To be sure, many of the structures of noble and popular memory still stand. We learn that the *capitanei portarum* were created by Saint Ambrose and from investitures by the emperor Otto and the archbishops Valperto and Ariberto.[163] So too, we also meet the statutes *in odium populi* and encounter the "wicked investiture" of the Archbishop Landolfo.[164] And yet, these factional narratives are not as pronounced. The nobles, for instance, are no longer the protagonists in Lanzone's rebellion (see above), while the statutes *in odium populi* carry even less weight than they did in *Galvagnana*, only appearing once, when the emperor Barbarossa seizes Milan, and vanishing immediately after the commune's restoration.

One explanation is that the text was intended not specifically for the nobility or *populares*, but for a different audience entirely. One readership is obvious, indicated by the text's dedication to Azzone Visconti.[165] (An observation which we will return to later in this section.) A second audience is suggested by the appearance of the *societ*à *della Motta* at the centre of the text's account of Lanzone's rebellion. The Motta was a corporate body generally representing well-to-do Milanese merchants, who were rich enough to be distinguished from the other *populares* but not well-born enough to be recognized as nobility. [166] It can be difficult to pin down a coherent identity for this faction. On one hand, Milan's merchants identified as a

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[163] CM A275, p. 135; CM, pp. 590, 606: *Et nota quod capitanei portarum facti sunt tribus vicibus ex diversis parentellis. Primi facti sunt per beatum Ambroxium, secundi facti sunt per imperatorem Ottonem primum [with Valpertus]; tertii facti sunt per Henribertum archiepiscopum.*
[164] CM, pp. 595-7.
[165] CM A275, p. 61.
[166] On Milan's merchants, see F. Chabod, "Di alcuni studi recente sull'età comunale e signorile nell'Italia settentrionale", *RSI*, 41 (1925), pp. 19-47. G. Soldi Rondini, *Saggi di storia e storiografia visconteo-sforzesche* (Bologna 1984), p. 11-12. Also see G. Martini, "L'Universitas Mercatorum di Milano e i suoi rapporti col potere politico (secoli XIII-XV)", in *Studi di storia medievale e moderna per Ernesto Sestan*, 1, (Florence, 1980), pp. 219-258.

distinct social group, with their own institutions, relationship to the regime, and presumably social memory. [167] On the other hand, few families identified solely as merchants. Fiamma, for instance, boasted ancestors who were merchants, but was himself born to a family of notaries.[168]

Therefore, it is with particular care and attention to nuance that we must consider how the *Chronicon Maius* functions as a vessel for this group's memories. The Motta are specifically given two unique anecdotes accounting for the society's origin, and the interests of merchants as sellers, buyers, and money-lenders is afforded a significant presence in the text. It is true that how the *Chronicon Maius* represents this group is peculiar. While they are given significant coverage, they do not receive the sort of aggrandisement enjoyed by the *populares* or nobility in, respectively, the *Manipulus Florum* or *Galvagnana*. Nevertheless, the language used to portray them is unique enough to warrant attention, if for no other reason than to register the *Chronicon*'s shift in discourse. We will outline the *Chronicon*'s individual treatment of the Motta and merchants, before proceeding to determine the general functionality of the *Chronicon Maius*.

The chronicle offers two explanations for the origin of the *societ*à *della Motta*. The stories agree on only one point: that, hierarchically, the society stood somewhere between the *populares* and nobility. The first of Fiamma's narratives alleges that the Motta were originally *populares* who became vassals of the *capitanei*, but then reckoned that this vassalage, rather than improving their social status, made them inferior to even the lowly *populares*. Consequently, the vassals renounced their ties to the nobles and "not wanting to be nobles, and not wanting to be reduced to a *popularis* name, were called the *pars de Mota* – that is, 'the middle party', as if the middle between the nobles and *populus*." The account concludes that "the credenza always fought against them."[169] The story is bizarre. Why, for instance, would the

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[167] For on overview of Milan's merchants, see P. Mainoni, “La Camera dei Mercanti di Milano tra economia e politica alla fine del medioevo”, in Cesare Mozzarelli (ed.) *Economia e corporazioni* (Milano, 1988). The political embodiment of the merchants, the *universitas mercatorum*, became increasingly influential from the late 12th century onward, receiving the right to elect their own consuls by at least 1159. See G. Martini, "L'Universitas Mercatorum di Milano e i suoi rapporti col potere politico (Secoli XIII-XV)" in L. Olschki (ed.) *Studi di storia medievale e moderna per Ernesto Sestan*, 1 (Florence, 1980), p. 222.

[168] CM, p. 716. G. Barbieri, *Origini del capitalismo lombardo* (Milan, 1961), p. 132. For the diverse social composition of families in, for instance, Pavia, see: E. Roveda, "Le istituzioni e la società in età visconto-sforzesca" in *Storia di Pavia*, 3 (Pavia, 1992), p. 90.

[169] CM, p. 590, fn 1: *Videntes isti capitaneorum vassalli se effectos popularibus inferiores, quia semper erant populares, et super vilitatem popularem addiderant servitutem, renuntiantes feudis sibi datis*

vassals of the *capitanei* – the *valvassori* – have been considered *inferiores* when the title normally indicated at least a low-grade noble status?

The *Chronicon Maius*'s second explanation for the society's origin is more sensible. Herein, the society is formed from *capitanei* and *valvassori* who had refused to give to Archbishop Ariberto "homage and fidelity that were unaccustomed and taxes that were undeserved."[170] After their defiance led to their expulsion from the city and the forfeiture of their dignities and fiefs, they retreated to a castle called *Mota*, where: "not wanting to be called *populares*, and no longer being able to be nobles, they created their own organisation from diverse families, which is called to the present day the *pars illorum de Mota.*"[171]

The narrative then merges with the text's account of Lanzone's rebellion. Events are precipitated by the request of Milan's *populares* that the *società della Motta* be repatriated. When Ariberto refuses, they rebel and elect Lanzone as their leader. The *società della Motta* evidently joined with the rebellious *populares*, with the text explaining that the *populus*, the *credenza*, and the *società della Motta* "obeyed Lanzone as if he were God."[172] The story, like the first, reflects the uneasy social position of Milan's *società della Mota*, which is not quite noble but defiantly not *popularis*. The only significant difference between each narrative concerns the society's relationship with the *populares*. While the first narrative contends that there was hostility between the two, the second supposes an alignment of interests.

This contradiction makes sense when interpreted as an expression of the historically mixed loyalties of the *società della Motta*, which over the course of the 13th century had originally supported Milan's guildsmen and the populist Torriani, before realigning with the nobility and the Visconti (it was, arguably, the society's defection to the nobility that gave Ottone Visconti the material support necessary to achieve victory at Desio).[173] And yet, the reader might be forgiven for still finding Fiamma's account of the *società della Motta* rather unsatisfying. No attempt is made

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ultra nobiles esse noluerunt, nec ad populare [sic] cognomen descendere, sed vocari voluerunt pars de Mota, idest media, quasi medii inter nobiles et populum. Contra istos semper pugnavit Credentia. For the historical rivalry between merchants and guilds, see Martini, "L'universitas mercatorum", pp. 233-6.

[170] CM, p. 609: *homagia et fidelitates insolitas et exactiones indebitas*

[171] CM, p. 609: *Et nolentes dici populares, nec esse poterant nobiles, fecerunt quamdam ex diversis parentelis congeriem, quo dicitur pars illorum de Mota usque in presentem diem.*

[172] CM, p. 615.

[173] For social tensions, see Koenig, *Il "popolo" dell'Italia*, p. 103. G. Soldi Rondinini, "Le vie transalpine del commercio milanese dal sec. XIII al XV", in *Felix olim Lombardia. Studi di storia padana dedicati dagli allievi a Giuseppe Martini* (Milan, 1978), pp. 370-3.

to reference the predominantly merchant membership of the society nor even to comment on its function in the city. Apart from acknowledging the *società della Motta*'s social status, the narratives only underscore the multiplicity of divisions and rivalries in Milan's body politic.

How the text generally represents the social memory of Milan's merchants (wealthy or otherwise, as not all merchants were members of the *società della Motta*) is problematic for similar reasons. Prior to the text's narrative for the 13th-century, *mercatores* are not identified as a separate social constituency. The closest the text gets to representing something akin to commercial activity is its unique observation that several members of the *populus* became wealthy enough to become *creditores* of the nobility. Similar language accounts for the origin of the *credenza*, which is alleged to have originally served as the political body that elected strongmen "to force [the nobles] to pay their creditors ".[174] Charmingly, Fiamma implies here that the *credentia* – when first formed – must have meant something approximating to "credit". All this constitutes a significant and unique contribution to the *Manipulus Florum*'s and *Galvagnana*'s representations of the early *populus*. It seems to channel the memory of Milan's merchants, who had historically been involved in money-lending, becoming significant *creditores* of not just the city's nobility but of the city itself.[175]

In isolation, however, this passage would still not be enough to convict the *Chronicon Maius* of an intention to engage with the social memory of merchants. But in the context of Fiamma's representation of the *populus* in the 13th century, a clear case can be made that this was Fiamma's agenda:

In the process of time the artisans were divided into two parties: those who live by buying and selling without manual labour are called *populus*, [including] both merchants and middle men having among them rich and poor. However, those who live by the work of their own hands

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[174] CM A275, p. 86: *Nam cum artiste propter sua opera fierent creditores nobilium, et pro solutione reciperent verbera et obprobrium, et globatim in una magna congerie omnes artistae elegerant unum ex nobilioribus et potentioribus sibi in tribunum. Et fuit eorum iudex et protector contra nobiles, et cogebat solvi creditoribus, unde credentia nomen accepit.* The *consules iustitiae* of the corporation of merchants would, by 1330, become responsible for enforcing the payment of debts. G. Martini, "L'Universitas Mercatorum di MIlano", p. 230.

[175] Grillo, *Milano in età comunale*, pp. 384-92. Manaresi edits an instance in 1197 when the merchant consuls worked with the commune to regulate standard interests for loans. C. Manaresi, *Gli atti del Comune di Milano fino all'anno MCCXVI* (Milan, 1919), p. 286. Manaresi is cited in Martini, "L'universitas mercatorum", p. 223. In the 13th century, matters of private debt seemed to be one of the juristic competencies of the merchant consulate. See M.F. Baroni, "Il consolato dei mercanti a Milano nel periodo comunale", in *NRS*, 59, (1975), p. 263.

are called *credentia* [belief], since they believed they sustained great damage from the nobles. Such people include *becharii, farinarii, calcifices, sutores et huius similies homines*.[176]

The text does several things which are new. First, the *credenza* here is redefined. No longer a corporate loan shark signifying "credit", it is the political embodiment of artisans with the belief (*credentia*) that they had been oppressed by the nobility. The *populus*, too, is redefined, now portrayed as the exclusive social embodiment of Milan's merchants. This is an entirely new method of categorisation. The *Manipulus Florum*, to be sure, had recognized that the *credenza* came to represent "neither *capitanei*, nor *vasalli*, nor the Motta, but artisans". But neither the *Manipulus Florum* nor the *Galvagnana* concludes that the *populus* was thus the representative body of merchants.[177] The *Chronicon Maius*'s classification of the *populus* is unique to itself, but to what purpose? Once again, aside from at least acknowledging a historical existence for Milan's merchant class, it seems that the only consequence of this language is to underscore the variety of Milan's social divisions.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to take this analysis any further, because the portion of the *Chronicon Maius* covering the period after 1216 is lost, thereby preventing us from determining how, or even if, the text structured the merchants' or *società della Motta*'s relationship with the Torriani and Visconti in a meaningful way. But there is enough here to deduce that the *Chronicon Maius* is not a factional history in the mould of the *Manipulus Florum* or *Galvagnana*. While there is a comparatively greater effort to engage with the historical experience of the merchants, we should appreciate that this is only one aspect of a text that also represented the memories of artisans and nobles. And unlike in previous texts, there is no singular narrative thread privileging the social perspective of any particular faction. The only theme that emerges is one of factional instability. The *populus* is divided between the merchant-*populus* and the *credenza*.[178] In another passage, the nobility is divided between adherents of the Torriani and Visconti.[179] The *pars illorum de la Turre* eventually

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[176] CM, p. 745: *In processu temporis isti artifices divisi sunt in duas partes, quia illi qui vivunt de emptionibus et venditionibus absque opere manuali, dicti sunt populus, et mercatores et homines medio modo se habentes inter divitias et paupertates. Illi autem qui vivunt de opere manuum suarum, dicti sunt credentia, eo quod credendo multa dampna sustinuerint a nobilibus, et isti tales sunt becharii, farinarii, calcifices, sutores et huius similies homines.*
[177] MF, p. 611: *...in processu temporis illi, qui non fuerunt Capitanei, nec Vasalli, nec de Motta, sed Artistae, dicti sunt Credentia, sicut Carnifices, Furnarii, Caligarii, Sutores, Fabri, Lanistae, Spociarii, Caementarii, et similes.*
[178] CM, pp. 745-6
[179] CM, pp. 744-5

finds itself divided, too, when the *società della Motta* leave their camp.[180] The reason why the *Chronicon Maius* is not a factional history is that its factions are too fractious to be stable and coherent protagonists.

These unstable factions are better described as the *Chronicon Maius*'s antagonists. The text goes significantly further than its predecessors in denouncing the evils of factionalism. Its position is particularly noticeable in its account for the factional divisions that rocked Milan at the turn of the 13th century. Yet again, we will use a comparison with the narratives of the *Manipulus Florum* and *Galvagnana* to put the *Chronicon Maius* into perspective. In their broad outlines, all three texts agree on the same version of events. Around the end of the 12th century, the *populus* creates the *credenza*, prompting the nobility a few years later to create the *societas Galiardorum*. By 1205 the two factions are in violent conflict, though a truce soon follows to momentarily end hostilities. The *Manipulus Florum* and *Galvagnana* treat the episode as just another instance of urban violence, unworthy of much commentary.[181] The *Chronicon Maius*, however, observes that the "dangerous schism" (*periculosum schisma*) had been so damaging for the city that it created "regimes distinct and discordant, so that the *civitas* seemed to be *duae civitates*".[182] The claim is repeated in a subsequent passage, despairing that in 1205 "the city of Milan was divided into two cities and two peoples"[183] This is stronger language than the *Manipulus Florum*'s line that Milan merely "was divided", and is significant because it acknowledges the extent to which factionalism could pose an existential threat to the *civitas*.

This narrative serves to legitimate signorial government, which is represented in the text as the best solution to the destructiveness of factionalism. This is the example set in the *Chronicon Maius* by the plenipotentiary archbishop Saint Ambrose as well as the early dukes, who are all credited with quelling factional discord.[184] We have, of course, seen this narrative in Fiamma's earlier histories. What is new to the *Chronicon Maius* is how the narrative is interweaved with a communitarian rhetoric

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[180] CM, pp. 744-5. The narrative is an accurate reflection of the proliferation of militaristic organisations at the end of the 12th century, as urban discord intensified. A. Colombo, *Milano sotto l'egida del Carroccio. La <<città-stato>>* (Milan, 1935).
[181] MF, p. 660: *Isto tempore cum Civitas ab antiquo esset divisia inter partem Nobilium ex una parte, et parte Popul ex alia, iterum in duas partes dividitur.*
[182] CM, p. 751: *regimina distincta et discordantia, ut sicut civitas videretur esse duas civitates*
[183] CM, p. 752: *...civitas mediolanensis in duas civitates et duos populos divisa.*
[184] CM A275, p. 136 (for Ambrose), p. 138 (for dukes).

upholding an ideal of the common good, placing a significant emphasis on the role of both citizens and government to act in the interest of the whole. We will highlight a few examples of the text's articulation of this mode of discourse.

We begin by considering how the *Chronicon Maius* describes the end of Milan's regime of dukes. Like in the *Galvagnana*, the chronicle alleges that the dukes willingly gave up their authority. But where the *Galvagnana* provides no motivation for their political suicide, the *Chronicon Maius* explains that "each living duke, cultivating in his heart love and affection more for his family and sons than for the common good, made his sons *capitanei* in some parish...and thus the dukes slowly stripped themselves [of their rights] and became paupers."[185] The explanation carries two important elements. The first is the communitarian language of the *communitatis utilitas*, which is absent from the *Chronicon Maius*'s predecessors.[186] The second is passage's moralising function, warning its reader about the threat posed to public authority by private interests.

A variation of this theme surfaces in the text's narrative of Lanzone's rebellion. We will recall that the rebellion is sparked by Archbishop Ariberto's refusal to permit the repatriation of the *società della Motta*. It is only when Ariberto swallows his pride and accepts reconciliation with the *società della Motta* and the *populus* that the rebellion is pacified. This is the only text that places Ariberto in the centre of events, while de-privileging the political role of individual factions (which are responsible for rebellion but not for peace-making). The purpose of the text is again to make a point about the responsibilities of signorial lordship. Ariberto is intended to be read as as a predecessor of the modern signore. He is described as a *dominus in temporalibus et spiritualibus et monarchus generalis*, wording that evokes the language used to describe the *Manipulus Florum*'s Ottone Visconti (a *dominus in temporalibus et spiritualibus*) or even the *Chronicon Maius*'s Azzone, whose regime is similarly described as a *monarchia*.[187] As an archetype for signorial government, Ariberto represents how the stability of the city relied on lordship acting *super partes*.

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[185] CM A275, p. 138: *prevaricatis ducibus, excrescentibus parentum et filiorum in cordibus ipsorum amore et dilectione plus quam communitatis utilitatibus, unusquisque dux dum viveret, faciebat filios suos capitaneos in aliqua plebe...sicque paulatim se denudantes pauperes effecti sunt.*

[186] E. Igor Mineo, "Cose in comune e bene comune. L'ideologia della comunità in Italia nel tardo medioevo", in A. Gamberini and G. Petralia (eds.) *Linguagii politici nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Rome, 2007), pp. 58-62.

[187] CM, p. 604; MF, p. 705. This observation appears in Cariboni, "Comunicazione simbolica", pp. 11-12. On Azzone's *monarchia*, see footnote 193.

Indeed, in both these cases, the text is using its narrative didactically, educating its readership on the qualities of good government. When we recall that this readership would have included Azzone Visconti, we might conclude that the text was imitating the function of a *speculum principis*. This would explain why, on a couple of occasions, the prescriptions of the text could be quite specific, as in the case of the *Chronicon Maius*'s unique description of Milan's consulate, allegedly founded by Charlemagne:

> [the *consules*] swore to spend or appropriate nothing from the income of the community. And the extra money was placed in the treasury of the community. And in this way infinite treasures were collected, to be expended in times of necessity. For this reason, the community did not desire to impose new taxes on the people. [188]

The emphasis here on the consulate's fiscal responsibility recalls a passage from Brunetto Latini's *Tresor*, a widely read 13th-century text in the mirror-for-princes genre, which enumerates economic stewardship as one of the duties of government.[189] The theme would have been relevant to the Visconti's own interest in fiscal management, exemplified by Azzone's creation of a new office of the treasury and *uffici finanziari*.[190] It is a theme that also appears in the *Chronicon Maius*'s description of Barbarossa's post-conquest administration of Milan. He appoints a vicar (a character absent from the *Manipulus Florum* and *Galvagnana*) who imposes heavy taxes on fishing, hunting, husbandry, and all acts of buying and selling. This malgovernance was severe enough to incur the disfavour of God, who conjured a blizzard to destroy the crops in Milan's contado. When the cause of the storm was discerned by Barbarossa, the *Chronicon Maius* tells us that he promptly replaced his vicar.[191] We can imagine how the anecdote might have been relished by any reader – artisan, merchant, or noble – subject to weighty taxation.

The text's emphasis on the responsibilities of government is coupled by an emphasis on the responsibility of Milan's citizenry to act for the sake of the common good. The message is expressed in the text's account of the early 13th century, when Milan was divided between the regimes of six factional podestà.

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[188] CM, p. 553: *Et iurabant nihil de introitibus comunitatis expendere nec distrahere, sed quod super habundabat, ponebatur in erario comunitatis, et per istum modum congregabantur thesauri infiniti, et tempore necesitatis expendebantur, nec oportebat propter hoc imponere populo novas collectas.*
[189] B. Latini, *Tresor*, edited and translated by P.G. Beltrami, P. Squillacioti, P. Torri, and S. Vatteroni (Turin, 2007). pp. 532, 836.
[190] P. Mainoni, "La camera dei mercanti di Milano", p. 161.
[191] CM, p. 699.

There were in the city *viri boni*, who lamented such enormous destruction of the city. Concord was discovered when an agreement was reached that the aforesaid six podestà would be annulled, and that [the city] would be entrusted to Lantermo Landriano, a sensible man, who would provide for a [new] regime. He elected two communal *consules*, and the city was pacified.[192]

This narrative is different from that of the *Manipulus Florum* and *Galvagnana*. Neither text links the worrying of *viri boni* with the annulment of the chaotic regime of six podestà (no reason, in fact, is given by either text for what brought about the city's pacification around 1205). The *Galvagnana*, in the context of the same episode, explicitly identifies merchants as supporting peace: "the fat men – that is, the merchants – and the middling men who desired peace"[193]. The seedling of the *Chronicon Maius*'s narrative probably comes from that passage. If so, it is significant that the *Chronicon Maius* nevertheless refrains from labelling the *viri boni* as merchants. While the *Manipulus Florum* and *Galvagnana* play a game of identifying particular factions as communal peacekeepers, the point of the *Chronicon Maius* is that factions exacerbate, rather than facilitate, the process of peace making. The *viri boni* represent Milanesi who could act independently of factional interests, supporting communitarian over factional values. This is, indeed, what rendered these men *boni*.

It is also significant that the *viri boni* are portrayed as relying on a signorial actor, Lantelmo, to set up a united government capable of making peace. It was not enough for the city to have *viri boni*; the agency of strong rulers was also necessary. To that end, a consulate could be an effective regime, though the text admits that it, too, eventually disintegrated under the pressures of factional conflict. It should be no surprise that ultimately the *Chronicon Maius* recognizes the Visconti as the only signoria able to create a permanent peace.

As it is known, the four parties – that is, the nobles, *Motta*, *populus*, and *credenza* – lasted up to the times of Azzone Visconti. Then there was a very strong monarchy that witnessed the calming of the four parties.[194]

In this rapid survey, we can appreciate a communitarian discourse in the *Chronicon Maius*, which it contrasts with the divisive, violent, and destructive

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[192] CM, p. 752: *Fuerunt in civitate viri boni, qui dolebant de tam enormi destructione civitatis, et inventa fuit concordia, quod supradicti sex potestates cassarentur, et quod committeretur Lantermo de Landriano, viro prudenti, quod provideret de regimine. Qui elegit duos consules comunes et pacificata fuit civitas.*

[193] GA, p. 351:*...populus pinguor ut sunt mercatores, et alii viri mediocres pacem diligentes...*

[194] CM, pp. 745-6: *Et nota quod iste quatuor partialitates, scilicet noblium, mote, populi et credentie duraverunt usque ad tempora Azi Vicecomitis; tunc enim monarchia fuit adeo fortis, quod alie partialitates videantur fuisse consopite.*

language of factionalism. The function of the text is clear, too, serving to promote signorial government – specifically, the Visconti *monarchia* – as a good and necessary solution to urban discord. But to return to a question posed at the beginning of this section, who is the audience of the text? We can reaffirm that Azzone is one intended reader, with the text consequently far more engaged with questions of governance in order to instruct and educate him (or other Visconti lords) on lordship.

The rest of the audience, however, is probably broader than the originally proposed merchants (which, as we mentioned, was itself a loosely defined faction). The communitarian language hints at a readership of educated and wealthy elites, who would have had little interest in the *populus*'s guild politics or the nobility's ecclesiastical privileges. For them, what mattered most was a government capable of keeping the peace and administering the city competently. Such beneficiaries of this style of governance would have – naturally enough – included merchants, who depended on the *pax Viscontea* for the security of their trade routes.[195] It would have also benefited officials like notaries and jurists, whose professional representative bodies operated outside of the traditional guild structure, and who relied on the apparatus of the city for their employment, livelihood, and sense of identity.[196] It is the notaries and jurists that therefore tended to be the most sympathetic to the idea of a city as an all-encompassing political community, and therefore favoured governments that could impose concord. The communitarian language of the *Chronicon Maius*, if not necessarily its monarchical bent, would have certainly appealed to this readership.

Even to limit the audience of the *Chronicon Maius* to these groups might be extreme. What is remarkable about the *Chronicon Maius* is that it is so unremarkable as a vessel of signorial language. Anti-factionalism, the common good, and monarchism have long been identified by academics studying signorial government as some of the most common themes of the literature of the period.[197] The *Chronicon Maius* is part of this trend to replace the language of factionalism with the more

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[195] Under the signoria, which proved particularly adept at securing transalpine trade routes, Milanese merchants were able to enjoy more lucrative returns from international commerce. See G. Soldi Rondinini, "Le vie transalpine".

[196] P. Mainoni*, Economia e politica nella Lombardia medievale: Da Bergamo a Milano fra XIII e XV secolo* (Cavallermaggiore, 1994), p. 209. G. De Vergottini, "Origini e sviluppo storico della <<comitatinanza>>", in G. Rossi (ed.) *Scritti di storia del diritto italiano*, 1 (Milan, 1978).

[197] For a survey of literature denouncing factionalism and championing social peace, see P. Jones, *The Italian City-State* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 611-615. For monarchic government, ibid., pp. 644-645.

communitarian and monarchical language of the signoria. If the language was not necessarily appreciated by the entirety of the city, it was nevertheless meant for the entirety, in an attempt to reshape the way Milanesi thought about lordship and its relationship to the city. We will continue this discussion as we turn our attention to the *Opusculum*, beyond a doubt Fiamma's most perfect expression of the language of a signoria *super partes*.

The *Opusculum*

The *Opusculum* begins in 1328, with the Visconti in exile, Milan under interdict, and Louis of Bavaria master of the Ambrosian city. The starting date was no doubt deliberately chosen to add an air of drama to a narrative that is fundamentally about the Visconti's political ascendancy. The *Opusculum* details how Azzone and his successors returned to power, made peace with the church, and presided over an ambitious programme of conquest and monumental architecture. The text ends in 1343/1344, with an account of Giovanni Visconti's restoration of the Ambrosian church. The *Opusculum* is unique among Fiamma's histories in focusing almost entirely on the actions of the Visconti signoria (unsurprisingly, given its temporal purview). What is striking about the text is its awareness of the ways in which the ascendancy of the Visconti changed the character and structure of the Milanese state. The text was, after all, written during a period of dramatic transformation of the institutions of the city. The number of seats on Milan's General Assembly was reduced and its members effectively chosen by the signoria, a signorial chancellery was coming into being, and for the first time – under Azzone – the regime claimed *plenitudo potestatis*, implying the right of the signore to revoke statutory or customary law.[198] Fiamma does not concern himself with the specifics of this programme, but he does provide a broad justification for the Visconti's status as lords, patrons, and ecclesiastical governors in Milan (and, indeed, Lombardy).[199] Fiamma expatiates

[198] On the General Assembly, see Somaini, "Processi costitutivi", pp. 693-4. A chancellery first appears in 1335, though it operated in conjunction with Milan's notary. It is not until after 1339 that its acts are sanctioned by the seal of the signoria alone. On the chancellery, see, M.F. Baroni, "La formazione della cancelleria viscontea (da Ottone a Gian Galeazzo)", in *Studi di storia medioevale e di diplomatica,* 2 (1977), pp. 104-5. B. Pagnin, "Problemi di diplomatica generale e di diplomatica signorile con speciale riguardo alla cancelleria visconteo-sforzesca", *Ricerche Medioevali*, 1 (Pavia, 1966). F. Cognasso, "Istituzioni comunali e signorili di Milano sotto i Visconti", in *Storia di Milano* 5, pp. 492-5. On *plenitudo potestatis*, see J. Black, *Absolutism in Renaissance Milan* (Oxford, 2009), p. 2.
[199] For the text's narrative of Visconti lordship over Lombardy, see especially *Opusculum*, pp. 14, 18-19, 21, 23.

frequently on the regime's ability to inspire the devotion of its subjects and to create consensus. A discourse of magnificence is used to justify the Visconti's building projects as a contribution to the city's common good. The text also emphasises the religiosity of the regime, with weighty implications about the regime's relationship to the papacy. The effect of this language is to represent the Visconti as essential to Milan's security, unity, and welfare. The *Opusculum* thus functions to complete the argument made by the *Chronicon Maius*, demonstrating specifically why the Visconti deserve to govern Milan. Whether or not Fiamma intended the *Opusculum* to be the continuation of the *Chronicon Maius* (which has long been assumed to be the case, though without much evidence), the text certainly merits consideration as its spiritual successor.

None of this, of course, should suggest that Fiamma was not careful to moderate his representation of the Visconti. The *Opusculum* shies away from explicitly using the term *reges* to describe its protagonists, conceding that – for all their virtues – the Visconti (specifically, Luchino and Giovanni) lacked certain qualities of kingship.

> And if our two lords of the city should have had five other qualities, they would not be called *capitanei*, but *reges*: these are, according to the statement of philosophers, sweet speech, the construction of roads and bridges, punishment of crime, upholding the law, and kindness to enemies.[200]

What is so peculiar about the passage is that the same chapter, labelled *Proprietates domus Vicecomitum*, had only just before suggested that the Visconti possessed some of the qualities they were alleged to have lacked, applauding the dynasty for their construction of bridges and fortresses and for their clemency.[201] An earlier chapter additionally declares that "no one ever served justice and peace better [than Luchino]".[202] While this could be explained as one more example of Fiamma's tendency to contradict himself, it is equally probable that the contradictions were intentional, implying that the Visconti had the characteristics of kings, without – perhaps for fear of offending a communally minded audience – making the claim

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[200] *Opusculum*, p. 36: *Et si isti duo domini nostre civitatis quinque alias conditiones haberent, non iam capitanei sed reges nominarentur, que sunt de secundum sententiam philosophorum, videlicet affatus dulcis, structura viarum et pontis, vindicta sceleris, tributum iuris, et hostium connexie amicabilis.*

[201] The question of what makes a signore legitimate is a complicated one, particularly in relation to the constitutional challenges posed by the emergence of the signoria. An excellent discussion of this problem can be found in P. Schiera, "Legitimacy, Discipline, and Institutions: Three Necessary Conditions for the Birth of the Modern State", in J. Kirshner (ed.) *The Origins of the State in Italy: 1300-1600* (Chicago, 1996).

[202] *Opusculum*, p. 35: *Nemo iustitiam et pacem unquam melius servavit.*

explicit.[203] The careful rhetoric is evocative of a larger textual programme to represent the Visconti as something greater than mere functionaries of the city's government, while still keeping the image of the dynasty anchored in Milan's communal traditions.

For that reason, it was important for Fiamma that the Visconti also be portrayed as broadly supported by the different political constituencies of Milan. For Fiamma, there could be no better test of "the love of the people" (*dilectio populi*) than when Lodrisio Visconti, Azzone's rival and a claimant to the signoria, invaded Milan's contado. Despite the fact that the invasion presented an opportunity for the Milanesi to rebel, "No citizen of Milan, nor brother, nor nephew, nor Ghibelline or Guelph, nor weak or strong man", the *Opusculum* tells us, "...gave aid or favour or counsel" to Azzone's enemies, "but all with one heart assumed arms against him, and fought vigorously for the *status* of their lords."[204]

The text employs similar wording in an earlier passage to describe how Milan's "young nobles, by no coercion, but spontaneously and at their own expense...prepared to undergo the danger of death for the honour and *status* of their lord."[205] This wide-ranging affection for Azzone is again expressed in the public reaction to his death, whereby "all the clergy, all the *populus* mourned of his death; indeed, all Lombardy mourned."[206] The listing of classes and factions emphasises that every element of Milan's body politic was invested in and faithful to Azzone's regime. The two references to the willingness of the Milanesi to fight for the "*status* of their lord" (*pro statu domini*) underscores this political devotion. The text informs us that this broad support extended to Azzone's successors, Luchino and Giovanni, who were elected by "all the people and all the officials and nobles of the city of Milan, concordantly and unanimously".[207] A language of affection thus also becomes a language of consensus, acknowledging Milan's citizens as the ultimate source of

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[203] C. Storti Storchi, "Politica e diritto in età viscontea", in G. Frasso, G. Velli, M. Vitale (eds.) *Petrarca e la Lombardia* (Rome, 2005), pp. 87-90.
[204] *Opusculum*, p. 27: *Nullus civis de Mediolano, nec frater, nec nepos, nec gybellinus aut guelfus, nec parvus aut magnus ad ipsum ivit, nec auxilium prestitit, aut favorem aut consilium; sed omnes uno corde contra ipsum arma sumpserunt, et pro statu domini sui viriliter pugnaverunt.*
[205] *Opusculum*, p. 27: *iuvenes nobiles qui nullo compellente, imo sponte et ad proprias expensas, totidem magnos dextrarios exposuerunt faleris nobilibus cohopertos. Ipsi quoque a planta pedis usque ad verticem submicantibus armis coruscantes, pro honore et statu domini sui mortis pericula subire parati fuerunt.*
[206] *Opusculum*, p. 33: *omnis clerus, omnis populus ingemuit de morte eius; etiam tota Lombardia.*
[207] *Opusculum*, p. 34: *totus populus et universi officiales et nobiles civitatis mediolanensibus [sic] concorditer et unanimiter.*

political power while also promoting the fiction that the Visconti exercised that power as a consequence of the unanimous consent of the people.

This language is joined by an emphasis on the magnificence of the signoria. This is a new language for Fiamma, though the concepts are not necessarily unique to him.[208] The theme comes from the friar's reading of Aristotle, and at different moments is linked with concepts of public order and the common good. Consider, for instance, how Fiamma defends the magnificent edifice of Azzone's palace in Milan:

> Azzone Visconti, considering himself to have made peace with the Church and to be freed from all his enemies, resolved in his heart to make his house glorious, for the Philosopher says in the fourth book of the Ethics that it is a work of magnificence to construct a dignified house, since the people seeing marvellous buildings stand thunderstruck in fervent admiration, as is stated in the sixth book of the Politics. And from this they judge a Prince to be of such power that it is impossible to attack him.[209]

The passage is both an argument for and justification of magnificence, which had the potential to awe onlookers into obedience by evoking the greatness of the ruling dynasty. Magnificence is thus rendered a tool for imposing political order, a necessary expense for protecting the integrity of the state. It is for this reason that Fiamma so often approvingly expatiates on the Visconti's construction of castles (*castra*) in newly conquered territories, recognising that these buildings had as much an ideological as a militaristic function.[210]

More broadly, magnificence is justified through its relationship to the common good.

> Since it behoves a magnificent prince to outlay large expenditures for the sake of the whole community – as the Philosopher states in the Ethics, the common good has something in common with the good sacred to God, for the divine good is defectively represented in a single person, or private or particular individual, but in the whole community devotion to religion or to divine religion or to the good shine forth more beautifully – Azzone Visconti, the lord of the city, who is responsible for the care of the whole population, on that account undertook, in his magnificence, to attend, after his own walls, to public buildings.[211]

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[208] Varanini, for instance, has identified a similar emphasis on monumental architecture in many cities of the Veneto. G.M. Varanini, "Propaganda dei regimi signorile: le esperienze venete del Trecento", in *Le forme della propaganda politica nel Due e nel Trecento* (Rome, 1994), pp. 331-333.

[209] *Opusculum*, pp. 15-16: *Azo Vicecomes considerans se cum ecclexia fore pacificatum, et ab universis hostibus esse liberatum, disposuit cor suum, et domum sibi faceret gloriosam, nam dicit phylosopus in quarto ethicorum, quod opus magnifici est preparare domum decentem; nam populus videns habitationes mirabiles, stat mente suspensus propter vehementem admirationem, sicut habetur in sex politicorum. Ex hoc opinatur principem esse tante potenie quod sit impossibile posse ipsum invadere.* Translation from L. Green, "Galvano Fiamma", p. 101. See article for a fuller account of Fiamma's theory of magnificence.

[210] *Opusculum*, pp. 18-19, 21.

[211] *Opusculum*, p. 20: *Quoniam ad magnificum principem decet facere magnos sumptus circa totam communitatem, dicente philosophe in ethicorum, quod bona communia habent aliquid simile bonis Deo sacratis. Bonum enim divinum in una persona singulari, vel in uno privato, sive particulari, debiliter*

The passage builds on the *Chronicon Maius*'s earlier discussion of lordship and the common good, arguing here that the construction of churches, strong walls, and other public buildings is a sacred duty of the prince devoted to his city's welfare. The perlocutive force of this language must have been to connect the idea of the regime to the well-being of the community, suggesting a certain inseparability between the good of the city and the good of the regime.[212]

An effort to aggrandise the regime is particularly evident in the *Opusculum*'s description of a festival of the Virgin's nativity.

> In this year in September Azzone Visconti, lord of Milan, began to honour the nativity feast of the nourishing Virgin. And he sent an edict that all the cities and towns and noble lands and notable castles carry silk cloths with the flags of their communities and offered them to the church in Milan. And Azzone, lord of the city, offered first a silk cloth scattered with many little shields with vipers.[213]

The ceremony is, ostensibly, a ritualistic expression of Milan's dominion over its subject territories, whose obedience is represented through the offering of their insignia to the Ambrosian church.[214] There are, however, a few unusual elements to the ritual that serve to aggrandise the Visconti more so than Milan. That the ritual falls on a feast day for Saint Mary, the patron saint of the Visconti family, and not the feast day of Saint Ambrose, the patron saint of Milan, underscores that the Visconti, not the city, were the centre of the territorial state.[215] The ritual's iconography is also significant for identifying the Visconti with Milan itself, an idea expressed by the detail that Azzone carried the family's personal standard and not – like the other participants in the ritual – the flag of his own city.[216] Though Cengarle diminishes the importance of the ritual by temporalizing it as a single event during Azzone's reign,

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representatur; sed in tota communitate pulcrius lucessit cultum sive bonum divinum. Ideo Azo Vicecomes, dominus civitatis, ad quem spectat cura totius universitatis, post particularia sua menia, ad communia edificia percuranda magnificus accessit. Translation from Green, "Galvano Fiamma", p. 104.

[212] Varanini has identified similar languages used by the regimes of the Veneto, which functioned to blur the concepts of the commune with that of the regime itself. Varanini, "Propoganda dei regimi signorile", p. 330.

[213] *Opusculum*, p. 22: *Isto anno fecit incipi Azo Vicecomes dominus civitatis ad honorem Virginis alme festum Nativitatis eius de mense septembris; et misit edictum, ut omnes civitates et burgi, vel terre nobiles, seu castra insignia portarent pannos de serico cum vexillis communitatum suarum, et in civitate Mediolani in ecclexia offerrent. Et obtulit ipse Azo dominus civitatis primo unum pannum de serico multis respersum vipereis scutulis.*

[214] G. Chittolini, "Civic Religion and Countryside in Late Medieval Italy", in T. Dean and C. Wickham (eds.) *City and Countryside in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy: Essays Presented to Philip Jones* (London, 1996).

[215] Cengarle, "La signoria di Azzone Visconti", pp. 99-101.

[216] Cengarle, "La signoria di Azzone Visconti", pp. 99-101.

we must acknowledge that the written description of a ritual is often just as important as the ritual itself, containing the power to shape and renew the memory of the event for both old and new readerships.[217] That Fiamma wrote this passage in the early 1340s therefore makes the ritual just as relevant to the signorial discourse of the reigns of Luchino and Giovanni Visconti as it was to Azzone's. The *Opusculum* accordingly functions to underscore the shift in the way that the regime related itself to the city.

There is one final issue that ought to be discussed, and that is how Fiamma engaged with issues concerning the church. So far, this is a theme that has not appeared much in this chapter. One reason is that there is little to say about Fiamma's thinking, which – at least in the *Galvagnana* and *Chronicon Maius* – reflects largely what might be expected from a Dominican. In the convoluted hierocratic debate over the jurisdictional spheres of the pope and emperor, the former is recognized as having ultimate spiritual and temporal authority over the latter. The right of the pope to invest the emperor with imperial jurisdiction is affirmed, just as is affirmed the pope's right to rule temporally during an imperial vacancy. Naturally enough, the texts take the side of Pope John XXII during his dispute with the "anti-emperor" Louis of Bavaria. Though much of Fiamma's Dominican dogma is not relevant for our purposes, it becomes highly relevant in the *Opusculum*, which emphasises the regime's religiosity.[218] This is not mere aggrandisement, nor an attempt to reconcile the fact that it was Matteo Visconti's intransigence that had caused John XXII to excommunicate several Visconti, place an interdict on their lands, and declare a crusade against the alleged "heretics" of Lombardy. What Fiamma does in the *Opusculum* is to suggest that the Visconti had effected Milan's religious renewal, correcting the sins of its past and overcoming its proclivity for heresy to restore the Ambrosian church and negotiate a detente with the papacy. This is represented as a revolutionary programme, whereby the regime overcame the seemingly insurmountable weight of history itself to save the soul of Milan. An emphasis on piety therefore becomes an argument for the value of the signoria's lordship.

Highly relevant to Fiamma's theme is the legacy of the destruction of Milan by Barbarossa in 1162. The experience, traumatic enough in the 12th-century, had

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[217] This interpretation is owed to P. Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Princeton, 2001).
[218] The best guide to Fiamma's texts as hierocratic theory still comes from Hunecke, "Die kirchenpolitischen Exkurse".

scarred Milan's historical consciousness so as to make the memory of Milan's destruction a living memory that reshaped the Milanesi's understanding of the entirety of their city's history. The Milanesi commemorated the event in a series of texts about Barbarossa's conquest of Milan, but also superimposed its memory over the grand narrative of Milanese history by identifying numerous instances that the city was destroyed. Benzo d'Alessandria bewailed how often Milan felt sword and fire, alleging that the city had been destroyed or conquered by the Tuscans, Gauls, Huns, Romans, Vandals, Slavs, Goths, Franks, Langobards, as well as Barbarossa and his alliance of Lombard cities.[219] His was not the only history to proffer lists of Milan's destroyers, with the now-lost *Chronica Constana* (cited in Fiamma's *Chronica Extravagans*) counting 20.[220] In the *Galvagnana* and *Chronicon Maius*, Fiamma himself enumerated each instance Milan was destroyed, with the conquest of Barbarossa registering at number 22. These lists were both the product of the classical tendency (absorbed into the medieval tradition) to understand history as a cyclical process and also the result of a psychological desire to contextualise the events of 1162, depriving the bitter memory of its unique historical significance by enumerating it as one of several instances of destruction.

This mode of commemoration raised the spectre that Milan would again fall victim to conquest, continuing the cycle of destruction and renewal. In the *Chronica Extravagans* (a compendium of topics on Milanese history, politics, and economy), Fiamma accordingly asks: Why was Milan destroyed so many times? Five reasons are given.[221] First, the city's geographic location, bordering the Germans and Franks, made it vulnerable to invasion. Second, the city's natural wealth (*delicias*) and position as the *corona regni ytalici* made it a tempting target for invaders. Third, the city refused to pay homage to its legal superiors, the emperor and the church, and so had to be humbled by war. Fourth, the Milanesi often succumbed to heresies like Arianism and catharism, which lost them God's protection. Fifth, the Milanesi disdained the Roman church, its archbishops, and other prelates – arrogance which precipitated the retribution of God and the church.[222]

The first two reasons could come from almost any Lombard author, who were inclined to recognise in the natural abundance of the region a natural temptation for

[219] Ferrai, "Bentii Alexandrini de Mediolano civitate Opusculum", p. 36.
[220] CE A275, pp. 42-43.
[221] CE, pp. 504-5.
[222] CE, pp. 504-5.

invaders.[223] The final three reasons, however, are original to Fiamma, and reflect the Dominican's harsh judgement on the religious behaviour of the Milanesi. Similar observations occasionally surface in his *Chronica Extravagans*. The city's heresy and unorthodoxy is invoked when the text alleges that "in the memory of men, no archbishop was ever not exiled by the citizens of Milan", concluding that "the people of Milan were not very devoted to the church".[224] All this is relevant, the *Chronica* explains, because the sins of Milan's citizens made them culpable for their city's misfortunes, including for 1162, a year that Milan had defied both the pope and emperor. Only when Barbarossa was excommunicated, and Milan had allied with the pope, the *Chronica Extravagans* explains, did Milan achieve victory against the emperor. The text expands on the lesson to argue that, indeed, the city was only ever victorious against its enemies – Barbarossa, Frederick II, and Louis of Bavaria – when allied with the church, even if, the text concedes, these alliances were made by the impious Milanesi more out of guilt (*vituperatio*) than honour.[225] The moral of this historical exegesis is that Milan's security depended on its fidelity to the church. The tragedy of the text, however, is that the natural heresy of the Milanesi too often prevented them from acting in their own best interests.

The genius of the *Opusculum* is how it relates this moralising to the Visconti. Fiamma, to be sure, acknowledges that Azzone could act impiously. For instance, the signore had recognised the legitimacy of Louis of Bavaria and his anti-pope, thereby giving the papacy further cause for excommunications and interdicts against the Visconti territorial state. Nevertheless, the *Opusculum* just as much blames the Milanesi for the regime's conflict with the church, describing how Milan itself had become a *nutrix omnium scelerum* and a *nidus hereticorum*.[226] As if to underscore that this was not a condition caused by Visconti lordship, the text then cites a 12th-century epistle by Saint Bernard as proof that this kind of heretical activity was in fact commonplace in Milan.[227] By contrast, the Visconti, despite their original disagreements with the church, are represented as inherently pious creatures. Despite

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[223] For instance, see Ferrai, "Bentii Alexandrini de Mediolano civitate Opusculum", p. 20; See also Bonvesin de la Riva, *Le meraviglie di Milano*, edited by P. Chiesa (Rome, 2009).
[224] CE, pp. 457-8: *in memoria hominum, nullus archiepiscopus fuit, qui non fuerit per cives de Mediolano exulatus...Ex his clare videtur, quod populus mediolanensis non fuerit multum ecclexie devotus.*
[225] CE A275, p. 43.
[226] *Opusculum*, p. 6.
[227] *Opusculum*, p. 6: *Unde bene dicit Bernardus in quadam epistola: non inveni in mundo populum adeo facilem ad conversionem et subversionem sicut populum mediolanensem.*

his recognition of Louis of Bavaria, Azzone is "a man of full faith and devotion" (*vir fide plenus et omni devotione*) and is given the title *pater omnium religiosorum*![228] Luchino and Giovanni Visconti are remembered as honouring religious men, building churches, and every day attending mass.[229]

Giovanni, in fact, receives particular acclaim for his pious service as archbishop. In the penultimate chapter of the *Opusculum*, Fiamma paints a generous portrait:

> The venerable lord archbishop Giovanni Visconti, desiring to walk the path of the venerable lord archbishop Ottone Visconti, seeing that the rights and goods of the church were dilapidated by certain evil archbishops and were alienated by the wicked investiture (called a fief, but in fact fraud), desiring to put an end to these breaches for all men, ordered all the feudatories of the church to be called before him. He decreed that the fiefs were his and revoked the sold or alienated estates to himself. He established goods on those worthy of honour and a fief; he deprived the unworthy and undignified of every fief; he instituted new feudatories. And thus, more than any other, he exalted the Milanese church in goods and privileges.[230]

The reclamation of ecclesiastical lands was in fact part of the signoria's programme to claim for itself the patrimony of the Ambrosian church.[231] Fiamma, however, expertly portrays it as a restoration of the church's ancient privileges and status. The reference to the *nefanda investitura* is in this context particularly meaningful. The phrase – cited earlier in this chapter – was used in other histories by Fiamma to describe the alienation of ecclesiastical land by the 11th-century Archbishop Landolfo, constituting the first serious diminution of the patrimony of the Milanese church. Giovanni's revocation of the *nefanda investitura* is thus a correction of the original sin of the church, heralding a new era of the Ambrosian church's primacy.

All this gives the piety of the Visconti particular political significance. It is also cited as the motivation for the regime's detente with the church. While the *Chronica Extravagans* had accused the Milanesi of only cooperating with the church

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[228] *Opusculum*, p. 33.
[229] *Opusculum*, pp. 35-36.
[230] *Opusculum*, p. 52:*Venerabilis dominus archiepiscous Johannes Vicecomes venerabilis domini Ottonis Vicecomitis archiepiscopi patrui sui vestigia imitari cupiens, iura et bona ecclexie per quosdam pestilentes archiepiscopos dilapidata, et per nefandas investituras nomine feudi, imo fraudis, alienata fuisse videns, ipse totis viribus hos excessus corripere cupiens, omnes feudatarios ecclesie mediolanensis ante suum conspectum citari fecit; feuda in suo robore statuit; vendita vel alienata predia ad se revocavit; dignos honore et feudo in bonis stabilivit; immeritos et indignos omni feudo privavit; novos feudatorios instituit. Et sic ecclesiam mediolanensem plus ceteris in bonis et prvilegiis amplificavit.*
[231] For an overview of Giovanni's finances, which relied heavily on the wealth of the Ambrosian patrimony, see P. Mainoni, "Un bilancio di Giovanni Visconti, arcivescovo e signore di Milano", in L.C. Mauri, L. De Angelis Cappabianca, and P. Mainoni (eds.) *L'età dei Visconti: Il dominio di Milano fra XIII e XV secolo* (Milan, 1993).

out of *vituperatio*, the *Opusculum* emphasises that Azzone's decision to make peace with the church was a consequence of his religiosity. A peace treaty is signed with Benedict XII because Azzone wanted "to show himself to be a true son of the church".[232] The effect of the text is to present the Visconti as good servants of the church, single-handedly presiding over a religious reformation in a city whose ecclesiastical institutions had been corrupted and whose people were prone to heresy. Insofar as Milan was always vulnerable when in conflict with the papacy, the Visconti's pious actions guaranteed the city's safety, putting an end to a vicious and violent pattern of sin and destruction.

Effectively, the *Opusculum* underscores the essentiality of Visconti lordship. Building on the *Chronicon Maius*'s communitarian language, the text demonstrates how the signoria could inspire the devotion of its subjects, impose peace and concord through its magnificence, and protect the physical and spiritual health of the city through its regal virtues. Factional language is discarded – replaced by a universal message of the benevolent lordship of the Visconti.

Fiamma, Factions, and the State

Gamberini has remarked on the capability of political actors to draw from a market of political languages.[233] It is merely a natural extension of this argument to assert that the signoria should utilise different discourses when engaging with various communities within the urban sphere. And yet, that the language of Fiamma's own histories should so vary is rather surprising. When academics write about the language, iconography, and rituals of the urban signoria, the standard conclusion is that they were employed "to show the signore as the representative of the whole citizenry and as the result of a common tradition."[234] It follows that the signoria sponsored a singular concept of the *civitas*, with a singular history and sense of destiny, so that it could legitimate itself as the final expression of a centuries-long historical process. What a past generation of academics somewhat coarsely called the

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[232] *Opusculum*, p. 15: *volens se ostendere esse filium ecclexie*.
[233] A. Gamberini, *Oltre le città* (Rome, 2009), p. 109. Gamberini references the work of Misericordia: M. Della Misericordia, "<<Per non privarci de nostre raxone, li siamo stati desobidienti>>. Patto, giustizia e resistenza nella cultura politica delle comunità alpine nello stato di Milano (XV secolo)", in C. Nubola and A. Würgler (eds.) *Suppliche, gravamina, lettere. Forme della comunicazione politica in Europa* (Bologna, 2004). Ibid., *Divenire comunità. Comuni rurali, poteri locali, identità sociali e territoriali in Valtellina e nella montagna lombarda nel tardo Medioevo* (Milan, 2006).
[234] Cariboni, "Comunicazione simbolica", p. 19: *"...a mostrare il signore quale rappresentate di tutta la cittadinanza e frutto comune di una tradizione*".

"despotism" of signorial government succeeded because it repressed factionalism to construct a political community centred around a single dynasty.[235] This argument is not necessarily incorrect, as there are plenty of examples of signori using language to address a singular political community. When the Scaligeri invoked the language of monarchy (*monarca*, *sceptrum regnum*, *sire*) or recalled (accurately) that Verona was once seat of the kings Alboin and Berengar, they were clearly attempting to shape the political identity of Verona's entire political body.[236] The same could be said of Fiamma's repeated efforts to represent the Visconti signoria as a continuation of an imagined monarchy dating to Milan's pre-communal era. And yet, the unique language of the *Manipulus Florum* and *Galvagnana* (and even the *Chronicon Maius*) should chasten us from assuming that the only audience for the signoria was a homogenous public.

Factions were still important. Lords that wanted to stay in power had to communicate both to a general and a factional audience, to show specifically how their lordship was relevant to the needs and experiences of particular social bodies.[237] This is no less true for the mid 14th century, despite the claims by the *Chronicon Maius* and *Opusculum* that the Visconti forced factions into submissiveness and even despite the disappearance of references to political parties in official communal documentation.[238] Though it is true that the Visconti signoria, for instance, succeeded in curtailing many of the privileges of guilds, they were too powerful to abolish altogether.[239] An attempt by Galeazzo to do so in 1326 was a short-lived affair. The guilds were again sanctioned by Azzone in 1329 (though in 1333 their autonomy was limited by placing them under the control of the Ufficio di Provisione). So, too, the *populares* remained a political force, a fact revealed above all in 1449, when the *populares* succeeded in taking control of the city during the chaotic days of the

[235] D. M. Bueno de Mesquita, "The Place of Despotism in Italian Politics", in J.R. Hale, J.R.L. Highfield, and B. Smalley (eds.) *Europe in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1965).
[236] Varanini, "Propaganda dei regimi signorili", pp. 335-36.
[237] A sensitivity to this language can be found in the scholarship of Philip Jones, who has remarked on the tendency of both Torriani and Visconti apologists to defend the presiding signoria's factional credentials. See Jones, *The Italian City-State*, p. 633. See also (quoted in Jones) Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 299. Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica*, edited by F. Bernini (Bari, 1942), pp. 527, 531; R. Weiss, "Bellino Bissolo, poeta milanese del duecento", *ASL*, 10 (1947), p. 45.
[238] By the 1340s, the *pars nobilium* and *pars della Motta* disappear from the civic records. The *credenza* was dissolved in 1311, after Matteo Visconti's return to power. See F. Somaini, "Il binomio imperfetto", in M. Gentile (ed.) *Guelfi e ghibellini nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Rome, 2005), pp. 144-45. On the *credenza*, see Ghiron, *La Credenza*, pp. 103-4.
[239] The autonomy of the guilds was under attack not just by the regime, but Milan's merchants. For an overview, see G. Barbieri, *Economia e politica nel ducato di Milano: 1386-1535* (Milan, 1938), pp. 37-36.

Ambrosian Republic.[240] The merchants fared better. They had their own association, the *universitas mercatorum*, which enjoyed substantial autonomy and assumed over the course of the Trecento powers to enforce debt payments, to oversee the observance of weights and measures, to maintain roads, to regulate tolls, and even to reimburse robbed merchants (a sort of proto-insurance scheme).[241] The organisation showed itself to be particularly resourceful after the death of Gian Galeazzo in 1402, when a weakened signoria necessitated that the society independently manage commercial relationships with other cities.[242] The nobles, of course, continued to be important political players under the signoria (and not always cooperative ones). The eminent magnate Francescolo da Pusterla led a minor revolt in 1340, and the party was prone to sedition in the years immediately following Gian Galeazzo's death. [243] All this is to underscore that factions, even if not always in name (the *credenza*, for instance, was dissolved in 1311), continued to carry political weight.[244] Given their persistence, it is only sensible that the regime would have attempted to engage with them directly, using Fiamma's histories (among other things) as a medium of communication.

Indeed, the histories of Fiamma evince a dual mode of signorial discourse. One mode emphasised a political message that would have been broadly acceptable (or at least inoffensive) to the entirety of the city. This language tended to invoke a commonly accepted value system (the common good, justice, peace, and concord) and also appealed to (as well as shaped) a shared concept of the *civitas* and its traditions. The other mode of discourse, intended for a defined and exclusive audience, engaged with and flattered the identities and social memories of particular social groups, making a case for an intimate political relationship between them and the signoria. Although the manuscript tradition can often be deceptive about the readerships of any particular text, it is nevertheless interesting to note that of Fiamma's surviviving works, there are 25 surviving copies of the *Manipulus Florum*, six of the *Galvagnana*, two of the *Chronicon Maius*, and one of the *Opusculum*. Of

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[240] Somaini, "Processi costitutivi", pp. 696-7.
[241] Martini, "L'universitas mercatorum", pp. 229-231. This account of the merchants' influence runs counter to the outdated argument made by E. Verga, *La Camera dei mercanti di Milano nei secoli passati* (Milan, 1916).
[242] Martini, "L'universitas mercatorum", p. 242.
[243] G. Biscaro, "Intorno alla congiura di Francescolo Pusterla". *ASL*, 47 (1920), pp. 267-71. See also Somaini, "Processi constitutivi", p. 702.
[244] See footnote 73.

the copies of the *Manipulus Florum* and Galvagnana that survive, 13 of the former and four of the latter rest today in Milanese libraries, potentially suggesting a wide Milanese readership for each (against the single copy of the *Chronicon Maius* and of the *Opusculum* found in Milan). Such was the *Manipulus Florum*'s popularity that by the late 14th century it was even translated into the Italian vernacular. [245] Also meaningful, much of the narrative from the *Galvagnana* was appropriated into the 15th-century *Annales Mediolanenses*.[246] Though there are many reasons why the *Manipulus Florum* and *Galvagnana* should have achieved this success (a topic requiring further research), one may well be that Milanese readers found these factional histories more relevant and useful than the generalist *Chronicon Maius* and *Opusculum* (whether these texts actually succeeded in influencing the way these factions related to the signoria is also deserving of further study). Certainly, if nothing else, we can conclude that their composition indicates an elaborate effort to demonstrate the regime's relevance to individual factions, revealing in the process Fiamma's own impressive ability to empathise with identities both formidable and sophisticated.

[245] T. Kaeppeli, *Scriptores Ordinis praedicatorum Medii Aevi*, 2 (Rome, 1975), pp. 6-18.
[246] "Annales Mediolanenses", pp. 641-714.

Chapter 2: The Covenantal History of Bonincontro Morigia

In April 1329, Bonincontro Morigia, a member of Monza's *secretum consilium camerae communis*, was summoned with 11 of his colleagues before the imperial vicar of Louis of Bavaria. They swore fidelity to the would-be emperor, but his vicar doubted their sincerity. "Many of us were afraid", Morigia recounts in his *Chronicon Modoetiense*, "lest [the vicar] should want to hold us as hostages."[1] To make the case that their and Monza's loyalty need not be coerced, a member of the secret council, concealing his own distress, gave the vicar assurances that the men of Monza had not forgotten the many privileges received by the emperor and his ancestors or forgotten that Louis of Bavaria was of the same noble blood of the blessed Lombard queen Theodelinda, the founder of Monza's great basilica and herself a daughter of Bavarian royalty.[2] The vicar was satisfied by this speech, but this was to his discredit. The Monzesi would show their true colours when they revolted against Louis's lordship later that month, reacting, Morigia informs us, to the cruelty of the emperor's armies, his avaricious thirst for gold, and the dubious legality of his imperial title.[3] The community's loyalty instead went to Azzone Visconti and in particular Milan. "Because what are of the Monzesi are of the Milanesi", says one magnate in Morigia's chronicle. "And contrarily, what are of the Milanesi are of the Monzesi."[4]

This is a minor event in the context of Morigia's *Chronicon*, primarily a history centred on the deeds of Milan and Monza from antiquity to the present.[5] The episode nevertheless encapsulates the tensions existing between Lombard localism and imperial universalism. On one hand, it was true that Monza, not a bishopric and therefore not an autonomous city, owed its many urban privileges to grants from various emperors, rendering the community juristically dependent on the empire for its status as a semi-autonomous political entity. On the other hand, Monza, a *burgus* in Milan's contado, could not ignore its relationship to the Ambrosian city, nor that in

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[1] Bonincontro Morigia, "Chronicon Modoetiense", in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 12 (Milano, 1728), p. 1155. Hereon, citations of the *Chronicon* will be rendered as BM.
[2] BM, p. 1155.
[3] BM, pp. 1156-7.
[4] BM, p. 1157: *Quia que Modoetiensium sunt, Mediolanensium sunt, et e converso quae Mediolanensium sunt, et Modoetiensium sunt.*
[5] The chronicle officially begins with the creation of the world, but the Muratori edition omits the first few chapters to instead start with Julius Caesar. Two manuscripts survive: a 14th-century MS (Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, D 271 inf.) and an 18th-century one (Monza, Biblioteca capitolare, b-28).

the 1330s (indeed, earlier) the weakness of the empire left it incapable of enforcing its dictates. (Recall that Louis of Bavaria, having been excommunicated by the pope, was to some not even a true emperor.) By the time the *Chronicon* was composed in the late 1340s, a Visconti territorial state was fulfilling the empire's professed role in Lombardy. At least in part, the text is a reaction to the change in political climate, penned with the purpose of reconciling Monza's traditional claims to privileged autonomy with its absorption into the new structures of a Lombard territorial state.

This makes the *Chronicon* a rather different beast from Fiamma's histories of Milan or Giovanni Cermenate's earlier history of Henry VII's Italian expedition, both of whom are referenced by Morigia.[6] The text is organized into four books. The first covers several key events in regional and local history, such as the Lombard invasion of Italy, the founding of the basilica of Saint John, and the Italian wars of Barbarossa. The second book focuses on Henry VII's failed campaign to reintroduce effective imperial authority to the north of Italy, while the third focuses on Pope John XXII's equally unsuccessful attempt to impose a papal lordship onto the region. Morigia's fourth book produces a happier narrative, focusing on the defeat of Azzone's rival Lodrisio and the return to Monza of the treasury of its basilica of Saint John, which had previously been sent to Avignon on the order of the papal legate, against the wishes of the basilica's canons.

The text was authored by a Ghibelline layman who was active in the politics of the territorial state on a local level.[7] Born to a noble family around 1295, Morigia was a high-ranking functionary of Monza, serving at different times as a militia commander, a member of Monza's secret council, an ambassador to Milan (responsible for facilitating the return of Monza's aforementioned treasury), and an ambassador to Venice (tasked with negotiating a trade agreement). He was also the relative of one of Galeazzo Visconti's strongmen in Monza, Giovanni Morigia. Though Morigia ends his history in 1349, he was refining it as late as 1357, annotating miracle stories that were alleged to have happened at Monza's Church of Saint Mary. There is no question that Morigia was highly religious. His chronicle brims with miracle narratives, biblical allusions, and hagiography (his is the first text to account for the life of Gerardo dei Tintori, Monza's patron saint). Although this

[6] BM, pp. 1084, 1089.
[7] All biography for Morigia derives from his *Chronicon*. A summary of relevant passages appears in M. Zabbia, "Morigia, Morigia", *DBI*, 76 (2012), pp. 836-7.

wealth of religious content is slightly unusual for a civic chronicle, it is perhaps not unusual for a product of Monza, a community that possessed, at least in the context of Lombardy, a uniquely spiritual sense of self. Far more than anything else, Morigia's chronicle is reflective of the colourful personality and outlook of that community, the so-called *caput Lombardiae* and host of the venerable Basilica of Saint John.[8]

This chapter will focus on the language used by Morigia's history to preserve Monza's sense of political and spiritual exceptionalism in the context of the community's incorporation into the territorial state. Its first section will consider Morigia's languages for sovereignty, emphasising the ways in which the text puts to use Lombard mythology and biblical metaphor, primarily from 1 and 2 Maccabees, to identify Monza as a privileged spiritual centre: the Jerusalem of Lombardy. The second section will consider the language with which Morigia defines the relationship between the prince and the *res publica* (Morigia's preferred term for the political community), in an effort to determine what Morigia considered to be the prerogatives and limitations of lordship. Emphasis will be placed on his use of a Roman political discourse. As with our study of Fiamma, this chapter constitutes a novel approach to the study of Morigia's history, which has hitherto been utilized either to construct positivist narratives for Visconti Lombardy or to compare against the lacunae of the single surviving manuscript of Cermenate's *Historia*, on which Morigia closely relies for his account of Henry VII's Italian campaign.[9] This chapter will instead understand Morigia's history as a sophisticated attempt by a community in the contado to define for itself a privileged place in the Visconti territorial state. The aim is to deepen our understanding of the political identities of *quasi-città*, whose penchants for autonomy were often indulged by the signoria, and to expose the unique discourses with which these communities framed their relationship with the territorial state.[10]

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[8] Both features of Monza's identity will be discussed below.

[9] L.A. Ferrai, "Prefazione", in L.A. Ferrai (ed.) *Historia Iohannis Cermenate* (Roma, 1889), pp. XXVI-XXVIII, XXXV-XL. Morigia features heavily in histories of the iron crown. See L.A. Muratori, *De Corona Ferrea* (Milano, 1719); G. Buccellati (ed.) *The Iron Crown and Imperial Europe* (Monza, 1995). He is also an important source for traditional narratives of 14th-century Lombard history. G. Barni, "Dall'età comunale all'età sforzesca", in A. Bosisio and G. Vismara (eds.) *Storia di Monza e della Brianza*, 2 (Milano, 1973); F. Cognasso, "L'unificazione della Lombardia sotto Milano", in *Storia di Milano*, 5 (Milano, 1955).

[10] For an overview with bibliography, see A. Gamberini, *Oltre le città* (Roma, 2009), pp. 39-45.

Monza, the Empire, and Lombard Identity

Central to understanding Morigia's text is the peculiar status of Monza. In the late 13th century the Milanese writer Bonvesin della Riva observed that the community was "more worthy to be called by name of a *civitas* than of a *burgus*", referring to its wealth and relatively large population (the largest of any community in Milan's contado).[11] The observation has some merit. The term *burgus* generally referred to a population centre altogether smaller than Monza. What prevented a promotion in nomenclature was both the absence of a bishop (generally considered a prerequisite for *civitates*) and its proximity to Milan, which all but condemned it to a diminishing servitude.[12] And yet, despite a long history under the influence of the Ambrosian city, the *burgus* exercised an impressive spirit of independence.[13] Uniquely for a territory in Milan's diocese, Monza acted as the centre of its own ecclesiastical district, the *Corte di Monza*, rejecting Milan's Ambrosian liturgy to observe the more conventional Roman variant. Its notaries, too, were stubbornly independent actors, refusing even as late as the first decade of the 16th century to follow the custom of other communities of the contado to enrol in Milan's civic *matricula*.[14] A penchant for autonomy was indulged by various patrons. Frederick Barbarossa separated Monza from Milan's jurisdiction, naming it a *sedes Regni Italici*.[15] The *burgus* was granted

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[11] A.A. Settia, *Castelli e villagi nell'Italia padana. Popolamento potere e sicurezza fra XI e XIII secolo* (Napoli, 1984), p. 347. Bonvesin de la Riva*, De Magnalibus urbis Mediolani. Le meraviglie di Milano* (Milano, 1974), p. 44: *civitatis quam burgi nomine dignior nuncupari*.

[12] Chittolini calls communities like Monza, technically not *civitates* but too large to be considered *burgi*, *quasi città*. For a discussion of the topic, with excellent bibliography, see G. Chittolini, "<<Quasi città>>. Borghi e terre in area lombarda nel tardo Medioevo", in *Città, comunità e feudi negli stati dell'Italia centro-settentrionale* (Milano, 1996). On the concept of a *burgus*, see (also cited in Chittolini), A.A. Settia, *Castelli e villagi nell'Italia padana* (Napoli, 1984), pp. 326-331; idem, "Da villaggio a città: lo sviluppo dei centri minore nell'Italia del Nord", in G. Battistella and S. Bortolani (eds.) *Città murate del Veneto* (Venezia, 1988), pp. 23-29; idem, "Dalla <<villa carpana>> alla città di Carpi, ovvero Rinascimento e informatica", *Studi storici*, 29 (1988), pp. 793-803.

[13] The Monzesi of the 17th and 18th centuries believed that, were it not for Milan, the *burgus* would have been considered equal in status to a *città provinciale*. See C. Storti Storichi, "Statuti di Monza" in *Scritti sugli Statuti Lombardi (*Milano, 2007), p. 241.

[14] A. Gamberini, "Il contado di Milano nel Trecento", in L.C. Mauri (ed.) *Contado e città in dialogo: Comuni urbani e comunità rurali nella Lombardia medievale* (Milano, 2003), p. 94. On the Monzese church, see V. Longoni, "Monza", in *Dizionario della Chiesa ambrosiana*, 4 (Milano, 1990), pp. 2325-2331 (cited in Gamberini). On notaries, see A. Liva, *Notariato e documento notarile a Milano. Dall'Alto Medievo alla fine del Settecento* (Roma, 1979), p. 249 (cited in Gamberini).

[15] On Barbarossa and Monza, see C. Paganini, "Monza and the Royal Coronations of Lombardy", in *The Iron Crown and Imperial Europe*, 1 (Monza, 1995), pp. 27-37. Barbarossa's acknowledgement of Monza as a *sedes regni* is referenced in Rahewinus, see Otto Frisingensis et Rahewinus, "Gesta Frederici I Imperatoris", in G. Waitz and B. von Simson (eds.) *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 46/3 (Hannover-Leipzig, 1912), p. 247.

generous privileges by the emperors Lothar (1136) and Henry VI (1187).[16] In 1311, Henry VII again tried to liberate Monza from Milan's onerous taxation and legislative control, placing it under the direct protection of the empire.[17] Such privileges were not to last. The Milanesi compelled Barbarossa to revoke Monza's dependency on the emperor in the Peace of Reggio of 1185.[18] The privileges granted by his successors were eroded over the course of the 13th century, with the *quasi-città*'s legal autonomy severely restricted after the 1258 Peace of Saint Ambrose. The liberties received from Henry VII only lasted so long as the emperor lived. After Henry's death in 1313, the *burgus* was again subject to Milan, though its overlordship was interrupted by brief periods of occupation by papal and imperial troops.[19] This precarious state of affairs ended in 1329, when Monza reverted to the control of Azzone Visconti and was made a direct dependency of the signoria, as opposed to Milan itself, though with its prerogatives over criminal justice entirely alienated to Milan's courts and those over civil justice, while nominally protected, significantly limited in practice.[20] By 1335, however, the community's right to arbitrate over disputes of civil and commercial law was restored. Most criminal cases still had to be judged in Milan, but it is likely that they were arbitrated in accordance with Monzese law. It is telling that Monza's 14th-century statutes do not cite as legally binding Milan's statute revision of 1330, but merely specify that, where the laws of the *burgus* are silent, recourse should be made to Milan's *Liber Consuetudinum* and the Peace of Saint Ambrose. These judicial privileges were later confirmed by Galeazzo II, with the autonomy of Monza's merchants from the jurisdiction of Milan confirmed by Luchino, Galeazzo II, Gian Galeazzo, and Caterina Visconti (consort of Gian Galeazzo).[21] Legal privileges and

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[16] E. Reinhard, “Monza and the Iron Crown in the Middle Ages”, in *The Iron Crown and Imperial Europe*, pp. 310-313.

[17] Gamberini, "Il contado di Milano", p. 95. See also BM, p. 1098. *Henrici VII Constitutiones*, in I. Schwalm (ed.) *MGH*, *Legum sectio*, 4/1 *Constitutiones et acta publica imperatoris et regum* (Hanover and Leipzig, 1906), n. 600, pp. 628-9. A.F. Frisi, *Memorie storiche di Monza e sua corta*, 1 (Milan, 1794), p. 122. A.F. Frisi, *Memorie storiche di Monza e sua corta*, 2 (Milan, 1794), pp. 150-1. For Morigia's reportage of Monza's relationship with Henry VII, see C. Paganini “Monza and the Royal Coronations of Lombardy", p. 42.

[18] C. Paganini, “Monza and the Royal Coronations of Lombardy”, p. 37.

[19] For an overview, see Storti Storchi, "Statuti di Monza", pp. 201-210. For Monza's return *sub iurisdictione comunis Medyolanensis* after Henry VII's death, see *Henrici VII Constitutiones*, 4/2, n. 1020, p. 1063.

[20] Gamberini, "Il contado di Milano," pp. 97-8.

[21] Storti Storchi, "Statuti di Monza", pp. 231-5. For an overview of the structure of Monzese government, also see C. Storti Storchi, "Istituzioni monzesi tra XIV e XV secolo" in *Scritti sugli statuti lombardi (*Milano, 2007), pp. 243-269.

recognition of local statutes were coupled with often lavish patronage, including ample donations to Monza's basilica.[22]

Despite these concessions, the privileges enjoyed by Monza were not as great as the much more substantial immunities and autonomies of a *terra separata* of the contado.[23] Still, Monza's treatment deserves an explanation. That Monza should have received so many privileges from so many political actors might be explained both as an effort to buy loyalty from an important urban centre and – in instances when emperors granted certain prerogatives to the community – as an effort to bridle Milan by weakening its control over its contado. In many ways, the fortunes of Monza compare to Treviglio's, a *burgus communis Mediolani* located on the periphery of the contado, which was also a frequent beneficiary of imperial privileges, including from both Henry VII and Louis of Bavaria, as well as privileges from the later Visconti, who granted its regime (a limited) *merum et mixtum imperium*.[24] And yet, unlike Treviglio, a sizeable community whose position on the periphery of the contado, inherently difficult to control, encouraged lords all the more to elicit loyalty with political concessions, Monza did not owe its favourable treatment wholly to its geographic condition. There was a significant cultural component at work, which made the Monzesi feel uniquely entitled to autonomy and influenced how outsiders interacted with the *burgus*. Some of these cultural factors have already been touched on by Storti Storchi, such as the *burgus*'s (accurate) claims to have once hosted the Lombard queen Theodelinda, a couple of Lombard kings, and the emperor Berengar I.[25] Monza itself was rather proud of its past association with royalty, and at the beginning of the 14th century relocated the tombs of King Agilulf, Queen Theodelinda, and King Adaloald for proud display in a special chapel of its main basilica.[26] And yet, other features of the history of the *burgus* arguably had a greater influence on its identity. Morigia's text naturally remembers his community's

[22] For the Visconti's patronage of the basilica, see below pp. 116-117.
[23] On the subject, see G. Chittolini, "Le 'terre separate' nel ducato di Milano in età sforzesca", in *Città, comunità e feudi*, pp. 61-83.
[24] G. Chittolini, "Legislazione statutaria e autonomie nella pianura bergamasca", in *Città, comunità e feudi*, p. 108. T. Santagiuliana and I. Santaguliana*, Storia di Treviglio* (Bergamo, 1965), p. 410. On Treviglio's *merum et mixtum imperium*, see Gamberini, "Il contado di Milano", p. 98, fn 40. For a general discussion of the autonomies of local Lombard communities, see G. Chittolini, "Terre, borghi e città in Lombardia alla fine del medioevo", in G. Chittolini (ed.) *Metamorfosi di un borgo: Vegevano in età visconteo-sforzesca* (Milano, 1992), pp. 7-30.
[25] C. Storti Storchi, "Statuti di Monza", p. 194. See also A. Paredi, "Dall'età barbarica al Comune", in A. Bosisio and G. Vismara (eds.) *Storia di Monza e della Brianza*, 1 (Milano, 1973), pp. 79-80.
[26] L. Beltrami, "La tomba della regina Teodolinda nella basilica di San Giovanni in Monza", *ASL*, 16 (1889), pp. 665-678.

associations with Theodelinda, Lombard kings, and emperors, but it is Monza's connection to the Basilica of Saint John (founded by Theodelinda) that constitutes its primary claim to exceptionalism.

The basilica was intimately associated with Monza's own identity, a relationship evinced by Morigia's unusual story for the basilica's foundation.[27] In his telling, on the night of the nativity of Saint John the Baptist, Queen Theodelinda experiences a vision, informing her that Saint Columbanus would appear at a spot where she should build Saint John's temple. Theodelinda travels through Lombardy until she finds herself at a clearing between the Ticino and Adda rivers, where finally Columbanus appears. He enjoins the queen to build a church *modo* (here), to which she replies *etiam* (yes), an exchange that gives the site its Latin name, *Modoetia* (Monza). The story makes the formation of Monza a consequence of the founding of the basilica, with the community even receiving its name from the dialogue that brought the basilica into existence. It is a story that contrasts with Morigia's source, the 8th-century Lombard historian Paul the Deacon, who recognized that a community called Monza pre-existed the church. [28] Whether Morigia made up the anecdote or (more plausibly) was repeating an older legend, it functioned to render Monza's very *raison d'être* to be the site of the basilica.[29]

This association is meaningful to Morigia because of the basilica's significance to the Lombard *gens*. Two conditions of the basilica are here relevant. First, the basilica was dedicated to John the Baptist. His special relationship to the Lombards is explained in Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* and is recounted by Morigia, explaining that the founding of the basilica marked the formation of a 'covenant' (my word) with the apostle. Saint John would intercede to protect the Lombard *gens* from military defeat, so long as the Lombards honoured his basilica. The history of the Lombards is a testament to the covenant's value. How else, Paul the Deacon writes, to explain why the Byzantine emperor Constans II failed to conquer the *gens* when he invaded Italy in the 7th century, at a time when the Lombards were pious, or why (and this is only implied) Charlemagne successfully conquered northern Italy in 774, at a time when the "unworthy and adulterous" tended

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[27] BM, pp. 1069-70.
[28] *Pauli Historia Langobardorum*, in L. Bethmann and G. Waitz (eds.) *MGH*, Scriptores rerum Langobardricarum et Italicarum saec. VX-IX (Hannover, 1878), c. 4.21, pp. 123-4.
[29] Morigia himself cites oral history as source material for his chronicle. BM, p. 1062.

to the basilica?[30] The inhabitants of Monza had absorbed the legend into their local history. A Monzese version of the *Historia Langobardorum*, compiled in the 10th century, includes several glosses that focus on Saint John's role as the *intercessor pro cunctis Longobardis* and that further flesh out the tale of Constans II's failed invasion of Lombardy.[31] The story is referenced three times in Morigia's history, implying that the covenant still remained relevant in the 14th century.[32] Monza's basilica would not have been sacked in the mid 1320s by papal troops, Morigia observes, "if the *gens* were not [now] wrapped in sin." They were exhorted to emulate the devotion of their ancestors, whose piety Saint John rewarded by protecting them from "the many adversaries of the Lombards, like Emperor Constantine [sic], who wanted to despoil the sacred temple and the Lombards."[33] Though it was the basilica that was ultimately the centre of devotion to the apostle, Morigia elides its function with Monza itself, termed in his text the *defensa Johannis*.[34]

The basilica of Monza's second distinction concerned its reputation as a site of coronation, where a would-be emperor, on his way to receiving the imperial crown in Rome, would first be presented the iron crown to become king of Italy. This is a peculiar claim, given that Milan after the fall of the Lombard Kingdom had been the traditional custodian of the crown. By the time Morigia's history was composed, a regal coronation in Monza probably only happened once, in 1128, when Conrad III was crowned by the archbishop of Milan not in Monza's Basilica of Saint John, but in its Church of San Michele (whose name recalls that of a church in Pavia, an actual coronation site for Lombard kings). It is possible that there were one or two other instances of coronation in Monza prior to this date, but the evidence is weak or purely conjectural, with the Basilica of Saint John only able to boast *ceremonial* coronations

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[30] *Pauli Historia Langobardorum*, c. 5.6, pp. 146-7: *Quod nos ita factum esse probavimus, qui ante Langobardorum perditionem eandem beati Iohannis basilicam, quae utique in loco qui Modicia dicitur est constituta, per viles personas ordinari conspeximus, uta ut indignis et adulteris non pro vitae merito, sed praemiorum datione, isdem locus venerabilis.*

[31] See G. Princi Braccini, "*La glossa monzese alla 'Historia Langobardorum', altri documenti del culto di san Giovanni Battista presso i Longobardi e l'incantesimo del Cod. Vat. Lat. 5359"*, in P. Chiesa (ed.) *Paolo Diacono. Uno scrittore fra tradizione longobarda e rinnovamento carolingio* (Udine 2000), pp. 457- 466, esp. p. 464.

[32] BM, pp. 1073-1074, 1139, 1143.

[33] BM, p. 1139: *Alioquin, nisi contigisset eos multis peccatis esse involutus, sicut legitur de multis adversariis Lanbobardorum, etiam de Imperatore Constantino, qui voluerat venire ad exspoliandum Templum Sanctum et Longobardos.*

[34] BM, p. 1152.

of Frederick Barbarossa and Henry VI.[35] Nevertheless, Barbarossa had proclaimed that it was in Monza that "[my] ancestors were accustomed to be crowned by right of the kingdom", despite receiving the iron crown in Milan.[36]

By the 13th century, the ranks of Italian intellectuals including Tolomeo da Lucca, Iacopo da Varagine, Dino Compagni, Ferreto Ferreti, Bonvesin della Riva, and Riccobaldo da Ferrara insisted that Monza was where kings of Italy were made.[37] Following the example set by Barbarossa, Henry VII in 1311 recognized that Monza was an historic centre of coronation, despite – like Barbarossa – ultimately choosing to receive the iron crown in Milan.[38] All this was enough to embroil Fiamma in the controversy, who admitted that the sources were far from clear on the matter. He aimed to clarify the issue in favour of Milan, basing his argument on (alleged) privileges granted by Constantine the Great and Pope Gregory I and on the Ambrosian city's (actual) history as an imperial capital during the late Roman Empire. The friar ultimately concludes that, notwithstanding differing opinions, at least "now it is held that in Germany he [the emperor] is crowned with the silver crown and in Milan with the iron crown.[39] This intervention was not enough to settle the debate. In 1355, the pope himself recognized Monza as the place Charles IV should receive the iron crown, although Charles still took the crown in Milan.[40] The Novarese historian Pietro Azario (to be introduced in our next chapter) erroneously would claim that Monza crowned Louis of Bavaria.[41]

Both conditions of the basilica lent it fame, but it was the second – Monza's alleged status as a coronation centre – that seems to have attracted the most attention

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[35] For some arguments suggesting Monzese coronations also in 1026 and 1093, see A. Ambrosioni, "The Iron Crown and the Coronations: Facts and Speculations", in *The Iron Crown and Imperial* Europe, pp. xxix-xxxiii. C. Paganini "Monza and the Royal Coronations", pp. 25-27. Conrad's coronation in 1128 is related by Landolfo Juniore, "Historia mediolanensis", in L. Bethmann and P. Jaffé (eds.) *MGH*, *Tomus Scriptorum*, 20 (Hannover, 1868), p. 44.

[36] Friedrich I. 2:1158-1167, in H. Appelt (ed.) *MGH, Diplomata* (Hanover, 1979), n. 253, p. 53...*que caput Lombardie et sedes regni illius esse dignoscitur, in qua etiam nostri antecessores de iure regni coronari consueverant.*

[37] C. Paganini, "Monza and the Royal Coronations of Lombardy", p. 41. H. Tucci "Henricus coronatur corona ferrea", in M. Croce (ed.) *Il viaggio di Enrico VII* (Città di Castello, 1993), p. 34. E. Reinhard, "Monza and the Iron Crown in the Middle Ages", p. 314.

[38] For background on Henry's decision to receive his coronation in Milan, see H. Tucci, "Henricus coronatur corona ferrea", pp. 33-34.

[39] CM, p. 601: *nunc servatur quod in Alamania coronatur corona argentea et in Mediolano corona ferrea*.

[40] Initially, however, even the Visconti agreed to allow the coronation to take place in Monza. It was only when the marquis of Montferrat offered to crown Charles in the church of San Michele in Pavia that the regime decided to host the would-be emperor in Milan. Cognasso, "L'unificazione della Lombardia", pp. 368-70.

[41] Petrus Azarius, *Chronicon*, in LA Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 16 (Milano, 1730), p. 310.

from other Lombards. [42] It is worth pausing to consider the myth's relevance to the Monzesi, who fuelled it by adorning their basilica with images and inscriptions that laid claim to its status as a coronation centre.[43] Morigia himself, through the authoritative voice of his history, gave additional credence to it by locating several centuries of regal coronations in Monza, spuriously beginning with the Lombard kings.[44]

At the core of the intention of both the Monzesi and their imperial partners was to create a basis for the autonomy of Monza (and thus its separation from Milan). In a diploma issued by Barbarossa, for instance, recognition of Monza as a coronation site was coupled by its designation as the *caput Lombardie et sedes regni illius*, a distinction that compared it to the imperial capital Aachen, the *caput et sedes regni Theutonici*, implying direct dependency on the emperor.[45] The Monzesi themselves maintained this fiction in a diploma addressed to Henry VII, in which they asserted Monza's credentials as a coronation site and called it a *sedes et corona regni Ytalie et caput Lombardiae*. The political significance of these imperial formulas – *sedes et corona regni Ytalie* or *caput Lombardiae* – is underscored by how often Morigia affirms their validity, claiming that they were repeatedly sanctioned "from the words and writings of emperors" (*ex dictis et scripturis imperatorum*). Charlemagne is alleged to have been the first to dub Monza the *caput Lombardiae,* conceding Monza the privilege of hosting future regal coronations in its Basilica of Saint John.[46] Otto III is alleged to have reconfirmed the privilege:

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[42] Paul the Deacon's mythology for Saint John also appears in Fiamma's *Manipulus Florum*: MF, p. 594.

[43] The 13th-century tympanum of the basilica represents Theodelinda offering to Saint John the iron crown. See A. Merati, *Storia architettonica del duomo di Monza* (Monza, 1962), pp. 92-93. A late 14th-century sculpted relief represents an ideal coronation in Monza and is inscribed with a model coronation speech by Monza's archpriest. See R. Cassanelli, "Art and Politics at the Courts of the Visconti and Sforza in the 14th and 15th Centuries", in *The Iron Crown and Imperial* Europe, pp. 92-102. Merati*, Storia architettonica del duomo*, pp. 96-97. For an English translation of the archpriest's speech, see A. Marina, "The Langobard Revival of Matteo il Magno Visconti, Lord of Milan", *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Reanissance*, 16/1 (2013), p. 410. Consider also the Quattrocento frescoes of the basilica. See F. Lollini, "Gli Zavattan a Monza: tracciato per una fortuna visiva", in R. Cassanelli and R. Conri (eds.) *Monza. La cappella di Teodolinda nel Duemo. Architettura, decorazione, restauri* (Monza, 1991).

[44] Zabbia argues that Morigia appropriated this history from a document prepared by Monzese officials in 1310 to convince Henry VII that Monza was the traditional site of coronation for Lombard kings. See Zabbia, "Morigia, Bonincontro".

[45] Friedrich I. 2:1158-1167, n. 253, p. 53 (for Monza) n. 502, p. 433 (for Aachen). Cited in B. Arnold, "The Western Empire, 1125-1197", in D. Luscombe and J. Riley-Smith (eds.) *The New Cambridge Medieval History: 1024-1198*, 2 (Cambridge, 2004), p. 396.

[46] BM, p. 1076.

He ordained and instituted that the land of Monza be the *caput Lombardiae et sedes regni*, considering that it, the principal *auditorium* [sic, maybe *adiutorium*?] of the Lombards, was constituted by the heavenly emperor for their protection. For this reason it was pleasing to the emperor of this land to constitute the land of Monza as the greater and more noble in the kingdom of Lombardy, and to be the *caput* and *sedes regni illius*...[47]

Developing the metaphor, Morigia underscores Monza's privileged status by citing another edict that contends that should the *caput Lombardiae* become the fief of another locality (presumably, Milan) it would be akin to "separating a head from the body's limbs".[48]

Thus a claim to the iron crown morphs into an argument for political autonomy, ultimately owed to the Basilica of Saint John's role as a coronation centre. Since the argument relies on concessions granted to Monza by past emperors, it is peculiar that Morigia should articulate an alternative discourse that is inherently inimical to the authority of the empire. The rest of this section will focus on this political language, considering its function to defend the sovereignty of the regional state, to protect Monza's status therein, and to legitimate the Visconti as *signori*.

At the core of this discourse was the implication that the Lombards were a chosen people. The comparison with the ancient Jews is suggested in the second book of Morigia's *Chronicon*, which contains a chapter relating the foundation of the Temple of Solomon to that of the Basilica of Saint John. The elements of both narratives are broken down for comparison side-by-side, with Morigia observing that a divine revelation preceded the construction of the Temple of Solomon, just as it did the Basilica of Saint John; that Jacob founded the temple after wandering from home, as did Theodelinda after wandering from her home; and that the temple was built on the site of the *domus Dei*, just as the basilica was built on the site of the *domus Sancti Johannis*.[49] A relationship between the two holy sites is suggested through the remainder of Morigia's chronicle. For example, the *Book of Lamentations*, a set of poetic laments for the destruction of the First Temple, is adapted to describe the grief felt by the people of Monza, "who wept day and night, tears on their cheeks", after

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[47] BM, p. 1080: *Hic ordinavit et instituit, quod Terra de Modoetia esset Caput Lombardiae, et sedes Regni illius, sciens ubi cunctis Lombardis ad illorum protectionem ab Imperatore coelesti, principale auditorium constitutum est. Propterea placuit ipsi Imperatori terrae constituere maiorem et nobiliorem in Regno suo Lombardiae Terram Modoetiae, et eum caput et sedem regni illius esse...*

[48] BM, p. 1080: *Hunc itaque praedictum locum nostrae tantum iurisidictioni, et soli nostrae potestati specialiter, et proprie vendicavimus, quem in corde nostro inconvulsibiliter fixum tenemus; et praefatam sedem nostram regalem per feudem alicui quod numquam velle inbeneficiare, neque nostris temporibus aliquo modo ab imperio alienare, quia hoc esset caput a membris separare etc.*

[49] BM, pp. 1071-2.

their basilica was sacked in 1324.[50] The logic of the comparison works only if the reader accepts that the two sites are of comparable significance, that the basilica is, in Morigia's words, Italy's *locus sanctissimus et venerandissimus*.[51] With the basilica of Saint John now rendered the Lombard Temple of Solomon (and Monza, by extension, Jerusalem), Saint John becomes more than merely a patron saint for the Lombards, but the enabler for a uniquely intimate relationship to the divine, conferring the Lombards the cultural and political exceptionalism of a chosen people.

The fierce tone of political independence implied by this discourse is a salient theme in the third book of Morigia's history. Although Morigia draws from several Old Testament histories, it is specifically Maccabees, the story of the second-century Jewish revolt against Seleucid rule, that gives the third book its narrative form. 1 and 2 Maccabees are patriotic texts, articulating the virtues of Jewish self-government and Judaic culture against the abuse and philistinism of a foreign hegemon.[52] The narrative was comprehensible to Morigia as an allegory for the last several decades of Lombardy's troubled relationship with popes and claimants to the empire, whose wars in Lombardy appeared just as violent and threatening as Seleucid persecution had been in the Holy Land. Maccabees is thus adapted into the third book of Morigia's history, which substitutes the Lombards for the Jews; the papacy, the empire, and the House of Anjou for the Seleucids; and Jewish patriotic and pseudo-nationalistic rhetoric for Lombard equivalents. The first indication of this agenda appears in the prologue of the third book, which is an adaptation of 2 Maccabees 17-23.[53] Here is the biblical text:

> We hope also, that the God, that delivered all his people, and gave them all a heritage, and the kingdom, and the priesthood, and the sanctuary, as he promised in the law, will shortly have mercy upon us, and gather us together out of every land under heaven into the holy place: for he hath delivered us out of great troubles, and hath purified the place. Now as concerning Judas Maccabeus, and his brethren, and the purification of the great temple, and the dedication of the altar, and the wars against Antiochus Epiphanes, and Eupator his son, and the manifest signs that came from heaven unto those that behaved themselves manfully to their honour for Judaism: so that, being but a few, they overcame the whole country, and chased barbarous multitudes, and recovered again the temple renowned all the world over,

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[50] BM, p. 1143: *Plorans ploravit per diem et per noctem, et lachyrmae eius in maxillis eius.* Compare with *Book of Lamentations*, c. 1-3, 8, 10-11, 16-19. Also note that the end of BM, c. 30, p. 1144 is adapted from *Isaiah*, c. 64.

[51] BM, p. 1072.

[52] An academic introduction to 1 and 2 Maccabees, replete with bibliography, can be found in M. Himmelfarb, "Judaism and Hellenism in 2 Maccabees", *Poetics Today*, 19/1 (1998), pp. 19-29.

[53] All biblical translations from *The Holy Bible, King James Version* (New York: Oxford Edition, 1769). Latin derives from the *Vulgate*. For the sake of a clearer comparison, passages in Morigia in imitation of Maccabees 1 and 2 have been rendered to match the English of the King James Version.

and freed the city, and upheld the laws which were going down, the Lord being gracious unto them with all favour.[54]

Morigia applies minimal revisions to the text, updating it merely for relevance to a new time and space.

We hope also, that the God, who by the prayers and merits of his saints John the Baptist and Ambrose the Confessor, that delivered all his people of Lombardy and gave them all a heritage, and the consulate, and the priesthood, and the favour, as he promised, since the treasury had been returned to our patron and defender Saint John, will have mercy upon us, and gather us together in one spot and will visit his sacred spot in Monza in accordance with his promise: for he hath delivered us out of great troubles, and hath purified this place from evil slanders. Now as concerning Galeazzo Visconti, and his brethren, and the restitution of the locals' Sacred Temple, and the new walls and the old walls that had been restored by patronage of the Ambrosian city, and of the noble land of Monza, and the wars against Pope John XXII, and the Roman emperor, and King Robert, and the miracles, signs, and mighty works that came from heaven unto those that fought for the defence of the country of the Lombards: so that, being but a few, they overcame the diverse and foreign barbarous multitudes, and recovered with its precious treasury the temple renowned across Italy, and freed Milan, the keeper of the Sainted Bodies, and the land of Monza, in which stands the Sacred Temple, and upheld the just laws which were going down, the Lord being gracious unto them with all favour.[55]

Morigia does not cite his biblical source (no doubt the reason why, up until now, the scholarship on Morigia has not acknowledged its presence in the text). Nevertheless, the text closely enough resembles the original Maccabees that any experienced 14th-century audience would have detected the intertextuality. The prologue epitomizes many of the themes of Morigia's third book, capturing above all

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[54] 2 Maccabees 2.17-23: *Deus autem, qui liberavit populum suum, et reddidit hereditatem omnibus, et regnum, et sacerdotium, et sanctificationem, sicut promisit in lege, speramus quod cito nostri miserebitur, et congregavit de sub cælo in locum sanctum. Eripuit enim nos de magnis periculis, et locum purgavit. De Iuda vero Machabæo, et fratribus eius, et de templi magni purificatione, et de aræ dedicatione: sed et de præliis, quæ pertinent ad Antiochum Nobilem, et filium eius Eupatorem: et de illuminationibus, quæ de cælo factæ sunt ad eos, qui pro Iudæis fortiter fecerunt, ita ut universam regionem, cum pauci essent, vindicarent, et barbaram multitudinem fugarent, et famosissimum in toto orbe templum recuperarent, et civitatem liberarent, et leges, quæ abolitæ erant, restituerentur, Domino cum omni tranquillitate propitio facto illis.*

[55] BM, p. 1117: *Deus autem, qui precibus et meritis Sanctorum eius Johannis Baptistae et Ambrosii Confessoris, liberavit populum suum Lombardiae, reddidit hereditatem omnibus, et Consulatum, et Sacerdotium, et significationem, sicut promisit, cum conversus fuerit thesaurus Sancto Johanni patrono et defensori suo, speravimus cito, quod nostri miserebitur, et congregabit nos in unum, et visitabimus secundum promissionem locum suum fanctum in Modoetia situm. Eripuit enim nos de magnis periculis, et locum a maledictis purgavit. De Galeatio vero Vicecomite, et fratribus eius, et de Sancti Templi localiorum restitutione, et de murorum novorum et veterum restauratorum ornatu Ambrosianae urbis, et nobilis Terrae Modoetiae; sed et de proeliis, quae perinent ad Papam Johannem XXII. ad Romanum Imperatorem, et ad Robertum Regem; et de miraculis, signis, et virtutibus, quae de Coelo facta sunt ad eos, qui pro defensione patriae Lombardorum pugnaverunt, ita ut universam regionem Lombardiae, cum pauci essent, vindicarent, et diversam et extraneam barbarorum multitudinem fugarent, et famosissimum Italiae Templum cum pretioso eius thesauro recuperarent; et Civitatem Mediolanensem Sanctorum Corporum gubernatricem, et Terram de Modoetia, in qua est aedificatum Sacrum Templum, liberarent; ut leges iustitiae , quae abolitae erant, restituerent, Domino cum omni tranquillitate, propitio facto illis.*

the sense of restoration that was a motif of its biblical source. The renewal of Lombardy's heritage, its just laws, and its religious identity is deftly identified with the restoration of the Basilica of Saint John, now rendered as the symbolic centre of Lombard political sovereignty. This patriotic regionalism is juxtaposed against the dominion of the maligned barbarians – the house of Anjou, the empire, and the papacy. Independence is sanctioned by no less an authority than Saint John, who fulfils his ancient promise to act as protector of Monza and the Lombard *gens*.

Though there are differences between the two passages, they have minor impact on meaning. The Vulgate edition of the passage from 2 Maccabees states that the Jews were restored to their *regnum*. Morigia, however, prefers *consulatus*, perhaps because a *regnum* was too revolutionary a goal for a region that at best could aspire to a *de facto* sovereignty. Morigia's lexical preference surely references the consular governments of the 12th century, as the term does frequently in texts as diverse as the *annales* of Genoa, Fiamma's *Galvagnana*, and Pietro Azario's *Chronicon de Gestis Principium Vicecomitum*.[56] Since Morigia has little to say about the internal politics of 12th-century Monza, there is nothing in his text that would allow us to determine whether he explicitly had in mind this form of regime.[57] In the only other example of the term's usage by Morigia, *consulatus* is applied to the contemporary government of Giovanni and Luchino Visconti, perhaps to imply that the Milanese signoria was the reincarnation of a more ancient form of governance, reminiscent of the medieval commune, based on shared authority and local autonomy.[58] A spirit of localism again surfaces in Morigia's original description of what his text's protagonists were fighting for. While Maccabees cites "Judaism", Morigia cites "defence of Lombardy", a decidedly political – rather than cultural-religious – phrase. This constitutes the only significant difference between Morigia and his source. While Maccabees is equally concerned with dangers posed to Jewish religion, Morigia is only focused – quite understandably – on the political dimension of the Maccabean texts.

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[56] Obertus Cancellarius, "Annales Genuenses ab anno MCLXIV", in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 6 (Milano, 1725), p. 299. Fiamma's *Galvagnana* says that Milan's fourth regime, which governed the city from the conquest of Charlemagne to that of Frederick I, was composed of *XII consules et credentia*: GA, p. 232-33. Azario calls the early regime of Novara a *consulatus*: P. Azario, *Chronicon de Gestis Principium Vicecomitum*, in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 16 (Milano, 1730) p. 361.

[57] For an overview of the Italian *consulatus* (its normal spelling), see D. Waley, *The Italian City-Republics* (London, 1969), pp. 60-65.

[58] BM, p. 1089.

To invoke the Maccabees was therefore to locate the violent conflicts of the 1320s and early 1330s into a tradition of proto-nationalistic struggle. By no means is the text a repudiation of the authority of the empire or papacy, whose ultimate sovereignty is dutifully acknowledged by Morigia.[59] Nevertheless, it is difficult to interpret the passage as something other than a statement in support of the autonomy of local actors.[60] This agenda is evident in how the text frames the divisions of the 1320s and 1330s, cast in terms of Lombards versus foreigners rather than indigenous Guelphs versus Ghibellines (perhaps a more accurate description of the politics of the conflict). Support for localism surfaces frequently in Morigia's account of the war against the papacy. Consider this passage on the papal siege of Milan in 1333, based on a passage from 1 Maccabees, which describes the threat to Jerusalem posed by the army of King Antiochus. First the biblical text:

> Now when Judas and his brethren saw that miseries were multiplied, and that the forces did encamp themselves in their borders: for they knew how the king had given commandment to destroy the people, and utterly abolish them; They said one to another, Let us restore the decayed fortune of our people, and let us fight for our people and the sanctuary. [61]

Now Morigia's version:

> Now when Galeazzo and his brethren saw that miseries were multiplied, and that the [papal] forces did encamp themselves in their borders: for they knew how the legate had given commandment to destroy the people, and utterly abolish them. They said to one another, "Let us restore the decayed fortune of our people, and let us fight for our people and our saints, who are in our city."[62]

The only meaningful difference between Morigia and his source is the substitution of the papal legate for King Antiochus and of Galeazzo Visconti for Judas Maccabeus (which carries a significance all its own, to be remarked on later). The patriotic resonance of the original Maccabees is just as powerful in Morigia's version, with the rhetoric hinging on a construction of events as a life-or-death struggle for

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[59] See below, p. 121.

[60] While it is clear that Morigia believed the empire and papacy were legitimate, recognition of their authority was contingent on their non-interference with Lombard law or governance (a notable exception is if such interference promoted the autonomies of Monza).

[61] 1 Maccabees 3:42-3: *Et vidit Iudas, et fratres eius, quia multiplicata sunt mala, et exercitus applicabant ad fines eorum: et cognoverunt verba regis, quæ mandavit populo facere in interitum, et consummationem: et dixerunt unusquisque ad proximum suum: Erigamus deiectionem populi nostri, et pugnemus pro populo nostro, et sanctis nostris.*

[62] BM, p. 1132: *Et vidit Galeaz et fratres eius, quia multiplicata sunt mala, et exercitus applicabat ad fines eorum, et cognoverunt verba Legati, qui mandavit populo facere interitum et consummationem. Et dixerunt unusquisque ad proximum, erigamus deiectionem populi nostri, et pugnemus pro populo nostro, et pro sanctis, qui sunt in Civitate nostra.*

survival. A similar sentiment is expressed in a speech by Galeazzo, recalling words spoken by Judas Maccabeus to rally his soldiers against the enemy. The biblical text:

> They come against us in much pride and iniquity to destroy us, and our wives and children, and to despoil us: But we fight for our lives and our laws.[63]

Now Morigia:

> They [the papal armies] came against us in much pride and great iniquity to destroy us, and our wives and children, and to despoil us. But we fight for our lives and our laws.[64]

The nature of the struggle is again as much a fight for survival as for political autonomy. The portrait of the enemy's barbarism crescendos in the text's description of the papal occupation of Monza in 1334, in which Morigia describes the slaughter of the local population by recalling Antiochus's slaughter of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Here is the text from Maccabees:

> And [Antiochus] commanded his men of war not to spare such as they met, and to slay such as went up upon the houses. Thus there was killing of young and old, making away of men, women, and children, slaying of virgins and infants.[65]

And Morigia:

> And unjustly in Monza, and in other parts where they could, they [the papal army] killed and did not spare anyone. Therefore, a massacre occurred of youths and elders and children; they dishonoured the beds: they violated other men's wives; they raped virgins and girls; they robbed, and plundered, and stole; they smashed and burned homes.[66]

Arguably, the adaptation of the Maccabean passage, which rewrites the text to also emphasise rape, plunder, and destruction, is more horrifying than the original – all the better for making a case to restore an independent Lombard *consulatus*.

This violent imagery also served to enhance Monza's status within the Visconti territorial state. Central to this function is the appropriation of another aspect of the Maccabees' narrative framework. The first and second book of Maccabees

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[63] 1 Maccabees 3.20-1: *Ipsi veniunt ad nos in multitudine contumaci, et superbia ut disperdant nos, et uxores nostras, et filios nostros, et ut spolient nos: nos vero pugnabimus pro animabus nostris, et legibus nostris:*

[64] BM, p. 1135-6. *Ipsi venerunt ad nos in multitudine contumaci, et superbia magna, ut disperdant nos, et uxores nostras, et filios nostros, et ut spoliant nos. Nos vero pugnabimus pro animabus nostris, et pro legibus nostris.*

[65] 2 Maccabees 5.12-13: *Iussit autem militibus interficere, nec parcere occursantibus, et per domos ascendentes trucidare. Fiebant ergo cædes iuvenum, ac seniorum, et mulierum, et natorum exterminia, virginumque et parvulorum neces.*

[66] BM, pp. 1138-9: *quia iniuste in Modoetia, et in aliis partibus, ubi potuerunt, interficiebant, nec parcebant. Fiebat ergo caedes iuvenum, ac seniorum, parvulorumque; maculabant thoros; rapiebant aliorum mulieres; virgines, puellas opprimebantis this rape?; robabant, et spoliabant; furabantur, proiiciebant domos, et incendebant.*This is, in fact, the second occasion that Morigia invokes this passage from Maccabees; the first instance describes a massacre by Monzese Guelphs of their Ghibelline compatriots. See BM, p. 1128.

explain the travails of the Jews to be a consequence of divine retribution for adopting Hellenistic practices, exemplified by Jews who transgressed temple law to exercise nude in a Greek gymnasium.[67] Morigia appropriates the essence of this narrative framework (while naturally omitting any ahistorical reference to a gymnasium) to cite the neglect of Monza's basilica as the primary reason for the Lombards' misfortunes. The narrative is seamlessly integrated with Paul the Deacon's thesis that Lombard security was contingent on their devotion to Saint John.[68] Perhaps because Morigia could draw on multiple literary traditions that equated sin with divine punishment, he exceeds even the authors of 1 and 2 Maccabees in interpreting temporal misfortune as a morality tale. This agenda is particularly evident in the way Morigia recasts a passage from 2 Maccabees describing the defilement of the Temple of Solomon. Here is the Maccabees:

> Yet was he [Antiochus] not content with this, but presumed to go into the most holy temple of all the world; Menelaus, that traitor to the laws, and to his own country, being his guide: And taking the holy vessels with polluted hands, and with profane hands pulling down the things that were dedicated by other kings to the augmentation and glory and honour of the place, he gave them away.[69]

Morigia's version:

> Yet they [the papal armies] were not content with this, but presumed to go into the most holy temple of all Italy. Many clerics and laymen, Milanesi and Monzesi, traitors and destroyers of their country, with consent of the legate, who desired to be the destroyer of the country of Milan, took the holy golden vessels with polluted hands. And with profane hands they handled and contaminated the other objects endowed with precious stones and pearls and the most holy reliquaries which were dedicated by the high popes, emperors, Lombard kings, and cities to the augmentation and glory and honour of the place [the basilica of Saint John].[70]

The biblical text identifies a foreigner, Antiochus, as the primary defiler of the Jewish Temple, assisted by only a single local traitor. Morigia, however, identifies several Milanesi and Monzesi as the treacherous "destroyers of their country", thus widening the blame for the sacking of the basilica of Saint John. Morigia concludes that this

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[67] On this function of the Maccabees, see footnote 52.
[68] BM, p. 1139. Morigia does this implicitly by referencing the failed invasion of Constans II.
[69] 2 Maccabees 5.15-16: *Sed nec ista sufficiunt: ausus est etiam intrare templum universa terra sanctius, Menelao ductore, qui legum, et patriæ fuit proditor: et scelestis manibus sumens sancta vasa, quæ ab aliis regibus, et civitatibus erant posita ad ornatum loci, et gloriam, contrectabat indigne, et contaminabat.*
[70] BM, p. 1139: *Sed nec ista sufficiunt. Ausi sunt intrare Templum situm in Modoetia, universae Italiae sanctius. Multi Clerici, et Laici, Mediolanenses, et Modoetienses, proditores, patriae destructores, etiam Legato consentiente, qui patriae Mediolani cupivit esse destructor, scelestis manibus sumentes pretiosa et sacra vasa aurea, et alia infinita eleymodia lapidibus, et margaraitis pretiosis, ac sanctissimis Reliquiis ornata, quae a summis Pontificibus, Imperatoribus, et Longobardorum Regibus, et Civitatibus erant posita ad ornatum illius Sancti Templi et gloriam, contrectabant indigne, et contaminabant.*

magna tribulatio was but the most recent misfortune experienced by the Monzesi, who had been *depraedati* and *spoliati* before.[71] A subsequent passage explicitly links these miseries to divine wrath, again with reliance on Maccabees:[72]

As so haughty in mind were the aforesaid horrible peoples, that they considered not that the Lord was angry for a while for the sins of them that dwelt in this land, and therefore his eye was not upon the Holy Temple.[73]

This introduces a new theme of spiritual conflict alongside that of patriotic resistance. So long as the Lombards are rebels against God, Morigia concludes, they will neither enjoy security nor sovereignty. As Morigia's narrative shifts to accentuate the spiritual struggle, it again adapts from Maccabees to impel its readership to return devotion to Saint John.[74]

Nevertheless God did not choose the Lombard people for the Holy Temple's sake, but the Holy Temple for the people's sake, on account of the devotion they had for Saint John the Baptist, as has been said before in this chronicle concerning the building of the Temple. And therefore the holy place itself, that was partaker with them of the adversity that happened to the nation, did afterward communicate in the benefits sent from the Lord: and as it was forsaken in the wrath of the Almighty, so again, the great Lord being reconciled, it was set up with all glory. So it was written in other histories divinely inspired by the great authors. Now I beseech those who read this history, that they be not discouraged for these calamities, but that they judge those punishments not to be for destruction, but for a chastening of our nation. For it is a token of his great goodness, when evildoers are not suffered for a long time, but forthwith punished. For not as with other nations, whom the Lord patiently forbeareth to punish, till they be come to the fullness of their suns, so dealeth he with us, lest that, being come to the height of sin, afterwards he should take vengeance of us. And therefore he never withdraweth his mercy from us: and though he punish with adversity, yet doth he never forsake the people he loves. But let this that we have spoken in a few words be for a warning unto us.[75]

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[71] BM, p. 1139.

[72] 2 Maccabees 5.17: *Ita alienatus mente Antiochus, non considerabat quod propter peccata habitantium civitatem, modicum Deus fuerat iratus: propter quod et accidit circa locum despectio:*

[73] BM, p. 1139: *Item alienatae mente praedictae pessimae permixtae gentes non considerabant, quia propter peccata habitantium in dicta Terra, modicum Dominus fuerat iratus: propter quod accidit circa Sacrum Templum despectio.*

[74] See 2 Maccabees 5.19-20: *Verum non propter locum, gentem: sed propter gentem, locum Deus elegit. Ideoque et ipse locus particeps factus est populi malorum: postea autem fiet socius bonorum, et qui derelictus in ira Dei omnipotentis est, iterum in magni Domini reconciliatione cum summa gloria exaltabitur.* And then: 2 Maccabees 6.12-17: *Obsecro autem eos qui hunc librum lecturi sunt, ne abhorrescant propter adversos casus: sed reputent ea quæ acciderunt, non ad interitum, sed ad correptionem esse generis nostri. Etenim multo tempore non sinere peccatoribus ex sententia agere, sed statim ultiones adhibere, magni beneficii est indicium. Non enim, sicut in aliis nationibus, Dominus patienter exspectat, ut eas cum judicii dies advenerit, in plenitudine peccatorum puniat: ita et in nobis statuit ut, peccatis nostris in finem devolutis, ita demum in nos vindicet. Propter quod numquam quidem a nobis misericordiam suam amovet: corripiens vero in adversis, populum suum non dereliquit. Sed hæc nobis ad commonitionem legentium dicta sint paucis.*

[75] BM, p. 1139: *Vere non propter Sacrum Templum gentem, sed propter gentem Lombardorum ex devotione eorum, quam habebat ad Sanctum Johannem Baptistam, sacrum locum dicti Templi Dominus elegit, prout in hac Chronica de aedificatione huius Templi ante dictum est. Ideoque ipse locus sanctus particeps factus est cum populo malorum. Postea autem fiet socius et honorum; et qui derelictus videtur ira Dei omnipotentis, iterum in magni Domini reconciliatione cum summa gloria*

The suffering of the Lombard people counter-intuitively becomes a mechanism for expressing their special covenant with God, whose punitive wrath is transformed into corrective love. As in Maccabees, which uses Seleucid persecution to make the case for an orthodox observance of Judaism, Morigia's *Chronicon* interprets the last few decades of violence as a reason (and warning) for the Lombards to honour their covenant by renewing their devotion to the Basilica of Saint John.[76] We accordingly return to an earlier theme, with Morigia once again exploiting his literary sources to reinforce the centrality of Saint John to the identity and physical security of the Lombards.

[The sacking of Monza's temple] would not have happened if the Monzesi were not wrapped in many sins, as is read of the many adversaries of the Lombards, like emperor Constantine [sic], who wanted to come to despoil the Sacred Temple and the Lombards. Indeed, these adversaries were scourged and repulsed each time by their audacity.[77]

What is so skilful about Morigia's text is how it operates to affirm Monza's sacred status even within the context of the Visconti *consulatus*, demonstrating that Monza remained just as important to the Visconti state as it had been to the now ineffectual empire. At its core, Morigia's reliance on Maccabees thus serves the local interests of Monza, the spiritual centre of the emergent regional state.

One final function distinguishes Morigia's appropriation of Maccabean themes. Just as Maccabees served to legitimate the lordship of the Hasmonean dynasty, which drew much of its legitimacy from the text's heroic portrait of Judas Maccabeus (brother to Simon, the dynasty's founder), Morigia's *Chronicon* functions to justify the ascendancy of the Visconti by its flattering representations of the Visconti lords. The text succeeds at this by associating several Visconti with Judas Maccabeus himself, implying that the Visconti – like Judas – were chosen agents of

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exaltabitur. Sic in aliis Historii divinitus a Summis Auctoribus scriptum est. Obsecro eos, qui hanc Historiam lecturi sunt, ne abhorrescant propter adversos casus, sed reputent ea, quae acciderunt, non ad interitum, sed ad correptionem generis esse nostri, etenim multo tempore, non sinere peccatoribus ex sententia agere, sed statim ultiones adhibere, magni beneficii est inditium. Non enim, sicut in aliis nationibus, Dominus patienter exspectat, ut eas, cum iuditii dies advenerit, in plentitudine peccatorum puniat, ita et in nobis statuit, ut peccatis nostris in fine devolutis, ita demum in nos vindicet: propter quod numquam quidem a nobis misericordiam suam amovet. Corripiens vero in adversis populum suum amat non derelinquendo. Sed haec nobis ad commonitionem legentium dicta sint paucis.

[76] On this theme in 2 Maccabees, see A. Momigliano, "The Second Book of Maccabees", *Classical Philology*, 70/2 (1975), p. 85.

[77] BM, p. 1139: *Alioquin, nisi contigisset eos multis peccatis esse involutos, sicut legitur de multis adversariis Longobardorum, etiam de Imperatore Constantino, qui voluerat venire ad exspoliandum Templum Sanctum, et Longobardos: etiam hi statim advenientes flagellati et repulsi utique fuissent ab audacia.*

the divine. This is a bold programme. Italian popular memory remembered Judas Maccabeus for his victories against enemies of the faith. Dante places him in paradise, joined by Joshua, Charlemagne, Roland, and Godfrey de Bouillon, all holy warriors.[78] The Visconti, however, were fighting against the church. And yet, Morigia's programme to represent the Visconti as servants of the divine is not unique. It compares to Fiamma's own rehabilitation of the Visconti in his *Opusculum,* therein represented as defenders of Catholic orthodoxy. The text expresses the confidence of the regime, whose victory over the Guelphs could be interpreted as clear evidence for the righteousness of its political project.

There are several comparisons identifying the Visconti with Judas Maccabeus. We have already observed that the text places several speeches of Judas into the mouth of Galeazzo Visconti, thereby equating the two actors with similar voice and purpose. The text does the same for Marco Visconti, who is described in the same terms used by Maccabees for Judas. Here is the biblical text:

Now when Maccabeus had his company about him, he could not be withstood by the heathen: for the wrath of the Lord was turned into mercy...And the fame of his holiness was spread everywhere...and the heathen being discomfited fled into the plain. Howbeit all the hindmost of them were slain with the sword: for they pursued them unto Gazera. [79]

Here is Morigia's adaptation:

Now when Marcus had his company about him, he could not be withstood by the aforementioned heathen: for the wrath of God was turned into mercy. The fame of his holiness was spread everywhere, since the heathen were discomfited in every battle from the sight of him, and they were slain with his sword, and they were pursued by him.[80]

Azzone, too, benefits from this programme, though the adaptations from Maccabees are made with more liberal license. The text from Maccabees is as follows:

So he got his people great honour, and put on a breastplate as a giant, and girt his warlike harness about him, and he made battles, protecting the host with his sword. In his acts he was like a lion, and like a lion's whelp roaring for his prey. For he pursued the wicked, and sought them out, and burnt up those that vexed his people. Wherefore the wicked shrunk for fear of him, and all the workers of iniquity were troubled, because salvation prospered in his hand.[81]

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[78] Dante Alighieri, *Dante's Divine Comedy*, edited by A. Amari-Parker and translated by H.W. Longfellow (London, 2006), c. XVIII.

[79] 2 Maccabees 8.5: *At Machabaeus, congregata multitudine, intolerabilis gentibus efficiebatur: ira enim Domini in misericordiam conversa est.* 2 Maccabees 8.7: *et fama virtutis ejus ubique diffundebatur.* 1 Maccabees 4.14-15: *et contritæ sunt gentes, et fugerunt in campum. Novissimi autem omnes ceciderunt in gladio, et persecuti sunt eos usque Gezeron*

[80] BM, p. 1136: *At Marcus, congregata multitudine, intolerabilis praedictis gentibus efficiebatur...Et fama virtutis eius ubique diffundebatur, quoniam contritae sunt gentes in omni bello a facie eius, et ceciderunt in gladio suo, et persecutae sunt ab eo.*

[81] 1 Maccabees 3.3-6: *Et dilatavit gloriam populo suo, et induit se loricam sicut gigas, et succinxit se arma bellica sua in prœliis, et protegebat castra gladio suo. Similis factus est leoni in operibus suis, et*

For Azzone the text is reformed accordingly (with the text deriving from Maccabees in bold):

Then with the principate of Azzone prosperous in these times, **Azzone got his people great honour, and put on** himself the arms of justice, mercy, grace, and alacrity; and his magnificence and majesty was widely praised, **because salvation prospered in his hand**.[82]

Luchino Visconti, after the battle of Parabiago, is given a modified version of Judas Maccabeus's epitaph, remembered as "the lover of his brothers and the people of Lombardy", a literary reference explicitly cited by Morigia, should the reader have missed the reference.[83]

Giovanni is the only Visconti politically active during the 1320s and 1330s not to receive a comparison with Judas, perhaps because, as archbishop, a comparison with a warlord would have been inappropriate. For the rest of the Visconti, however, these comparisons suggest that they, like Judas, were God's hammers.

Morigia's usage of Maccabees shifts the paradigm for Lombard sovereignty. Regional independence is anchored in the sacred convenant of the Lombard people, while the Visconti are legitimated as executors of the divine will. Morigia's rhetoric is unique, but in substance, his language for lordship, in particular, compares to that found in contemporary statutes of dedication, which identified God – rather than the *populus* – as the agent that granted temporal dominion of a community, premising the legitimacy of a regime on its divine mandate.[84] Such language also disrupts the relationship between positive law and sovereignty, diminishing the political role of the *populus* (earlier statutes of dedication had vaguely acknowledged popular

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sicut catulus leonis rugiens in venatione. Et persecutus est iniquos perscrutans eos: et qui conturbabant populum suum, eos succendit flammis: et repulsi sunt inimici eius præ timore eius, et omnes operarii iniquitatis conturbati sunt: et directa est salus in manu eius.

[82] BM, p. 1163: *Porro Azonis principatus temporibus istis* ***prosperando ipso Azo dilatavit gloriam populo suo, et induit*** *se armis iustitiae, misericordia, gratia, et alacritate; et amplificata est eius magnificentia, et dominatio,* ***et directa est salus in manu eius...***

[83] BM, p. 1175: *Hic est Fratrum amator, et populi Lombardiae*. Compare to 2 Maccabees 15:14: *Hic est fratrum amator, et populi Israel*.

[84] Cengarle's essays identify this feature in the act of dedication for Parma and Piacenza. For Parma, see F. Cengarle, "Le arenghe dei decreti viscontei", in A. Gamberini and G. Petralia (eds.) *Linguaggi politici nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2007), pp. 65-66. For Piacenza, see F. Cengarle, "Il reato politico contro la civitas come crimine de lesa maestá in due statuti cittadini dell'età de Azzone Visconti", in M.N. Covini, M. Della Misericordia, A. Gamberini, and F. Somaini (eds.) *Medioevo dei poteri* (Roma, 2012), pp. 71-2.

election, at least in theory).[85] Morigia's biblical metaphor serves the monarchical ideology of the regime, a subject that will be elaborated upon in the following section.

For now, it is worth underscoring the way that the text ingeniously defends the interests of Monza within its conceptualization of a sovereign regional state. Drawing from a plethora of political languages and mythologies, the *Chronicon* represents Monza as the *caput Lombardiae* and *corona regni Ytalie* – indeed, Jerusalem itself – implying for the *burgus* a special political as well as spiritual authority. By far the text's most creative rhetoric comes from its exceptional use of Maccabees. So far as we can determine, its mode of appropriation from Maccabees is without precedent. The texts, of course, had a history of being invoked by medieval writers. They were frequently used by crusaders looking for *exempla* of military martyrdom, and by ecclesiastics who were attracted to the texts as a metaphor for the supremacy of the spiritual over the temporal (Salimbene of Adam, for instance, compares Frederick II to the Seleucid ruler Antiochus.).[86] Something else entirely is Morigia's usage of Maccabees to make a case for regional autonomy and a particular community's spiritual exceptionalism.

Was this effective? The Visconti, for their part, had long recognized the basilica's spiritual worth, both to placate the Monzesi and the canons of their basilica and to reap the intangible political benefits that came from association with an important spiritual centre, which – as shown by Morigia's text – had a flair for self-promotion.[87] Matteo Visconti donated money for the building's restoration, begun in 1300, and in 1319 returned stolen treasure to the basilica, which had been looted by the Torriani in the 1270s.[88] The basilica's treasury was later purloined to Avignon. In 1335, Azzone interceded for its return. Seven years later, when the arrangements for repatriation were finalized, Giovanni personally led the procession that marked the treasury's arrival in Monza on 20 March 1344, an event commemorated by several

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[85] See Cengarle, "Le arenghe dei decreti viscontei", pp. 59-65.
[86] N. Morton, "The defence of the Holy land and the memory of the Maccabees", *JMH* 36/3 (2010), pp. 275-93. See also M. Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History: 400-1500* (Manchester, 2011), p 56.
[87] Storti Storchi, "Statuti di Monza", p. 199.
[88] P. Majocchi, *Pavia città regia: Storia e memoria di una capitale medievale* (Roma, 2008), pp. 180-187, esp. pp. 185-6. The repatriation of the treasury by Matteo is recorded by Morigia, see BM, p. 1114. For the restoration of he basilica, see R. Conti, Testimonianze storiche e artistiche dall'epoca dei Visconti agli Sforza", in F. De Giacomi and E. Galbiati (eds.) *Monza: La sua storia*, 5 (Milano, 2002), pp. 148-51. Merati, *Storia architettonica del duomo*, pp. 74-5. The restitution of Monza's treasure is recalled in San Giovanni's lunette. For discussion, see Marina, "The Langobard Revival", p. 396, n. 38.

sources, including Morigia.[89] Additional gifts were made to the basilica, with Giovanni and Galeazzo II each endowing it with a chapel (Giovanni's, appropriately, was decorated with images of the archbishop restoring the basilica's treasury).[90] Gian Galeazzo honoured the basilica by making it the location for the funeral service of Francesco il Vecchio.[91] Gian Galeazzo's wife Caterina chose to be buried there.[92] The confirmation of Monza's privileges by numerous Visconti is no doubt further proof of the esteem in which the basilica was held. Morigia's *Chronicon*, to be sure, was not the cause for the good fortune of Monza or its basilica, which had received special attention and valuable political concessions even before the history's production. So if nothing else, the *Chronicon* serves to represent the deep meaningfulness of the basilica to local Monzesi, as well as the lengths to which they went to fuel and adapt its powerful mythology in order to sustain special affection. This is a point we will return to in our conclusion for the chapter.

Lordship

We now move from questions of civic privilege and identity to consider how Morigia frames the relationship between communities and their lords. Several intellectual traditions influenced his thinking. One was a biblical conceptualization of kingship, an influence which should come as no surprise, given what we have already observed about Morigia's reliance on the Old Testament for structuring his historical thought. Equally significant is Morigia's appropriation of a tradition of Roman political thought. This includes Roman communitarian and moral terminology, particularly from Cicero and Sallust, which, as Quentin Skinner and Ronald Witt have shown, had been influential on the political writings of 13th- and 14th-century *dictatores* and on monumental artworks like Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Allegory of Good Governance*.[93] Morigia's thinking also seems to have been impacted by the doctrine of absolutism found in Seneca's *De Clementia*, whose weighty influence on medieval and

[89] BM, p. 1181. Annales Mediolanenses, p. 719. CM, pp. 520-1.
[90] Majoochi, *Pavia città regia* pp. 186-7.
[91] A. Rigon, "<<Echo la bona memoria del signo>> I funerali carraresi nella cronachistica", in P. Marini, E. Napione, and G.M. Varanini (eds.) *Cangrande della Scala: La morte e il corredo di un principe nel medioevo europeo* (Venezia, 2004), p. 195.
[92] Frisi, *Memorie storiche di Monza e sua corta*, pp. 60-61.
[93] This is the central argument of Q. Skinner, *Visions of Politics: Renaissance Virtues*, 2 (Cambridge, 2002). This section will build on the insights made in his chapters on Lorenzetti. The relationship between the dictatores and Roman literature is considered in R. Witt, "Medieval 'Ars Dictaminis' and the Beginnings of Humanism: A New Construction of the Problem", *Renaissance Quarterly*, 35.1 (1982).

Renaissance theories of monarchy has been recently stressed by Peter Stacey.[94] That Morigia draws from this rich inheritance of Roman and biblical political thought is a product of a rather typical education in rhetoric and grammar. His originality lies in how he interweaves these traditions to create a sophisticated defense of absolutist lordship, premised on the virtue of the ideal prince.

The prologue of Morigia's second book witnesses the first outlines of this discourse, explaining the limitations of ordinary human agency in order to prepare its argument for the necessity of princely lordship:

> Since mankind is subject to the contamination of sin, desiring earthly and not heavenly things, each *univeritas populorum* does not possess the free judgement (*liberum arbitrium*) conceded to it by God, and each places itself under the creature and not the creator...To not possess free judgement and to place oneself under the creature is to be ruled by arrogance and by avarice, is to obey money, and is not to attend to the health of the *res publica*, but instead to personal utility. And this is injustice, which disturbs and destroys everything.[95]

This indictment of mankind in part derives from a standard theological understanding of post-lapsarian sin. Its inclusion may have been directly influenced by one of Morigia's sources, Giovanni Cermenate, who observes – in language that L.A. Ferrai identifies as similar to Morigia's – that mankind's "miserable condition" is what inclines him toward sin.[96] Within the theological framework, however, the language of Roman thought is also conspicuous. The vices Morigia identifies as prohibiting the *universitas populorum* from exercising justice – *superbia, avaritia*, and *obediens pecuniae* – ultimately derive from Sallust, who faults *superbia* and *avaritia* (closely associated with *cupido pecuniae*) for corrupting the ancient virtue of Rome.[97] The terminology may have been inherited from his *Bellum Catilinae*, or more plausibly was indirectly appropriated from contemporary Italian discourse that had thoroughly absorbed the Sallustian categories of vice. For instance, a somewhat similar trio of vices – *avaritia*, *sup[er]bia*, and *vanagloria* – is inscribed above the

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[94] P. Stacey, *Roman Monarchy and the Renaissance Prince* (Cambridge, 2007). (Note that Stacey, however, does not discuss Seneca's specific influence on Morigia.)

[95] BM, pp. 1089-90: *Quoniam humana generatio subiacet vitiorum contagionibus, cupiendo terrena, et non coelestia, omnis universitas populorum non retinet liberum arbitrium a Deo sibi concessum, et se supponit creaturae, et non Creatori...Non retinere liberum arbitrium et se supponere creaturae, est regi a superbia, ab avaritia, obedire pecuniae, et non praetendere ad salutem respublicae, sed ad propriam utilitatem, et haec est iniustitia, quae omnia turbat et dissipat.*

[96] G. Cermenate, *Historia Iohannis de Cermenate*, edited by L.A. Ferrai (Roma, 1889), p. 16: *eius [humanum genus] misera conditio prona naturaliter et labilis ad peccandum...exigat*. The similarity in language is observed by Ferrai in fn. 1.

[97] Skinner, Visions of Politics, pp. 22. D. Earl, *The Political Thought of Sallust* (Cambridge, 1961), p. 14. Sallust, *Bellum Catiliniae*, in J.C. Rolfe (ed. and trans.) *Sallust* (London, 1931), cc. vi-xiii, pp. 10-22.

image of tyranny in Lorenzetti's *Allegory of Bad Government*, and also appears – albeit with *vanagloria* rendered as *inanis gloria* – in the *Oculus Pastoralis*.[98] *Superbia*, *invidia*, and *avaritia* are identified in Dante's *Inferno* as the three sparks that set men's hearts aflame.[99] In Milan, the poet Stefanardo da Vimercato blames *avaritia* and *ambitio* for subverting his city's peaceful state, while the notary Giovanni Cermenate cites *ambitio* and *invidia* as the causes of strife within the Torriani clan.[100] Nevertheless, there is an important difference between the way Morigia invokes the terminology and its usage by both his near contemporaries and Sallust. They considered vice to be a deviation from virtuous behaviour, a consequence of moral decay that in turn corroded the integrity of a faction or state. Morigia, however, regards it as not a deviation but characteristic of *omnis universitas populorum*. Inherently, human society is unable to exercise the "free judgement" (*liberum arbitrium*) necessary for justice.

This usage of *liberum arbitrium* is essential to understanding Morigia's political philosophy. Its meaning here is elusive, since the term is defined in the negative. A more positive definition appears later in the text, this time explicitly equating *liberum arbitrium* with justice itself.

> But to possess *liberum arbitrium* is to conserve, help, and augment the *respublica* at the same time as upholding justice; and this is a certain virtue of justice, which conserves all good temporal things, and both calms the body and saves the soul.[101]

The political resonance of the term sets its meaning apart from its usage by Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, or Abelard, who invoke *liberum arbitrium* in a theological-metaphysical sense to mean "free will"; that is, the agency to choose between good and evil.[102] Closer to Morigia's meaning is Dante's definition of

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[98] Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, p. 94. *Superbia*, *avaritia*, and *inanis gloria* are identified in the Oculus pastorialis as the hostes vite hominis. See "Oculus Pastoralis", in D. Franceschi (ed.) *Memorie dell'Accademia dell Scienze di Torino*, 11 (Torino, 1966), p. 52.

[99] J.K. Hyde, "Views on Faction and Civil Strife in thirteenth and fourteenth-century Italy" in Daniel Waley (ed.) *Literacy and its Uses*: *studies on medieval Italy* (Manchester, 1993), pp. 60-61. Dante Alighieri, *La divina commedia di Dante Alighieri: Inferno*, edited by Nicolò Bettoni (Milano, 1825), c. vi, l. 74.

[100] Stephanardus de Vimercato, "Poema de Gestis in Civitate Mediolani", in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, 9 (Milan, 1726), p. 67. Cermenate, *Historia Iohannis de Cermenate*, p. 27.

[101] BM, p. 1090: *Retinere autem liberum arbitrium, est salva iustitia conservare, adiuvare, et augere rempublicam; et haec virtus est quaedam Iustitiae, quae omnia bona temporalia conservat, et quietat etiam corpus, et animam salvat.*

[102] C. McCluskey, "Bernard of Clairvaux on the Nature of Human Agency", *Revista Portueguesa de Filosofia*, 64 (Jan-March, 2008), pp. 305-6. Peter Abailard, *Sic et Non*: A Critical Edition, edited by B. Boyer and R. McKeon (Chicago, 1977), c. LVI, pp. 232-3: *Quod homo liberum arbitrium peccando amiserit et non.* See also Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*.

liberum arbitrium. In the *Monarchia*, *liberum arbitrium* is defined as "free judgment of the will" (*liberum de voluntate iudicium*), which is achieved when judgement is uninhibited by worldly desires (in similar vein, Morgia's *liberum arbitrium* entails freedom from avarice).[103] Dante's definition, however, does not imply a responsibility to the state; indeed, Dante argues that man is most free when he exists for his own sake and not for the sake of another.[104]

For the sense of civic responsibility inherent in the term, Morigia's usage has most in common with that of Seneca's *De Clementia*, in which *liberum arbitrium* implies the political and moral authority – the free judgement – to ignore positive law when doing so would be in service of a higher principle of justice; what Seneca calls the "equal and good". To be sure, Morigia's meaning is not so legalistic. But like Seneca, his understanding of *liberum arbitrium* depends on its possessor having a moral authority that is pure in intention, and therefore unburdened by sin, allowing uninhibited devotion to the welfare of the community.[105] That is, both Morigia and Seneca identify in *liberum arbitrium* the capacity to promote the health of the *res publica* in a way that also satisfies the requirements of justice. Likewise, they agree that the requisite moral authority to do so is absent from the *universitas populorum*. This is why, in *De Clementia*, Seneca locates *liberum arbitrium* exclusively in the prince, whose superior virtue is what justifies his absolute authority. Morigia – as we will see – comes to a similar conclusion, identifying the community's salvation in the mould of the *princeps* of virtue.

For this argument, however, Morigia does not rely directly on Seneca but instead on the Franciscan John of Wales's *Communiloquium*, a handbook for preachers written around 1266 (just a few years before the release of Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's *Politics*). The handbook carries a heavy emphasis on political topics, offering its reader a general discussion of the state, the *princeps*, and various other political themes, based on frequent citations of patristic, biblical, and Roman authorities (with Seneca among them).[106] While Morigia's possession of the

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[103] Dante Alighieri, *Dante's Monarchia*, edited by R. Kay (Toronto, 1998), p. 64, 1.12.1.
[104]Dante, *Monarchia*, p. 66, 1.12.8: *Propter quod sciendum quod illud est liberum quod "sui met et non alterius gratia est," ut Phylosopho placet in hiis que 'De simpliciter ente'.*
[105] Seneca, *De Clementia*, in A. Ball (ed.*) Selected Essays of Seneca and the Satire on the Deification of Claudius* (New York, 1908), bk. 2, c. 7.3, p. 71: *liberum arbitrium habet; non sub formula, sed ex aequo et bono iudicat*.
[106] J. Swanson, *John of Wales: A study of the Works and Ideas of a Thirteenth-century Friar* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 63-106

book could be interpreted as further evidence of his religiosity, perhaps even suggesting that he himself was a preacher (unusual for a member of an urban militia, but not entirely impossible, either), it is more likely that Morigia had the text for much the same reason as did Chaucer, who utilized it as an edifying guide to politics.[107]

Morigia relies on the *Communiloquium* to propose that the sinful *universitas* could be given order through several different models of lordship.[108] There were divinely ordained kings (*reges assumti divina ordinatione et praeceptione*); or there were princes elected by the authority of the divine church (*ab Ecclesia Divina auctoritate*); or there were princes who governed through paternal succession (*Principes gubernantes...paterna succesione*). Each of these models is taken from the Old Testament as examples of regimes instituted by the ancient *populus Dei*. Morigia also considers the capacity of a people to elect their own rulers, just as the Romans elected *imperatores et consules*. But he warns that this mode of governance only works when guided by the wisdom of a universal emperor or pope:

> And because the entirety of the people, on account of their weak and miserable condition, cannot attend to the health of the *res publica* with true concord and justice, which is the way of the soul and body, except through the just precepts and admonitions of the high pope and through the holy laws of the just Roman Emperor, it is appropriate that all mankind be reconciled under them.[109]

The passage deviates from the tone of John of Wales, who genuinely seems to have admired systems of political election (and in particular the humble character of Rome's early consulate).[110] Instead it returns us to Morigia's earlier assumptions about the moral failings of human society, now termed its "weak and miserable condition" (again, recalling Cermenate's phrasing). Here, however, he provides a solution to the problem, identifying the emperor and pope as agents for enacting the just precepts and

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[107] Cosimo de' Medici even included it on his list for a library's ideal contents. For a discussion of the influence of John of Wales's *Communiloquium* (which survives in some 144 manuscripts), see Swanson, *John of Wales*, pp. 201-226.

[108] Johannes Gallensis, *Communiloquium sive summa collationum Johannis Gallensis* (Augsburg, 1475) [accessible online at http://web.wlu.ca/history/cnighman/Communiloquium.pdf], pp. 22-24. Hereon cited as Wales.

[109] BM, p. 1090: *Et quia unanimitas populi not potest praetendere pro sua debili misera conditione cum vera concordia et iustitia ad salutem reipublicae, quae est conversatio animae et corporis, nisi per iusta praecepta et ammonitiones Summi Pontificis, et per Sacras leges iusti Romani Imperatoris, sub quibus tota universitas humani generi reconciliari oportet.*

[110] Wales, p. 23.

holy laws that could lead the wayward society back to virtue (which, indeed, was also Cermenate's solution).[111]

But the lordship of universal monarchs was merely one possibility. Indeed, given Morigia's hostility toward recent emperors and Pope John XXII (see the prologue of his third book), perhaps not even the optimal one. Better still for the Lombards, a modern chosen people, was some form of divinely ordained local lordship, which would imitate one of the three regimes enjoyed by the original *populus Dei*. This position would be consistent with the theological-political programme found in the prologue of Morigia's third book, but we should nevertheless recognize that Morigia does not make the argument explicit. This is probably due both to a desire to avoid offending republican sensibilities and to a general lack of interest in the political mechanisms by which lords assumed authority. In the only instance where Morigia raises the issue, he vaguely acknowledges that "a prince ought to be legitimately constituted and ought to be ruled by divine and human law", a set of criteria – appropriated from John of Wales – that comes without further explanation.[112] While the reference to human law (i.e., positive law) could potentially suggest that the *populus* had a role in a prince's legitimate succession, Morigia does not elsewhere afford positive law any such function. Instead, Morigia implies that it was a ruler's individual virtue, sanctioned by a divine mandate, that legitimated his lordship. These assumptions are borne out in an anecdote about Galeazzo's receipt of the custody of Monza in 1324. Galeazzo does not receive it from the Monzese people (who, we are told, are invalidated as political actors because of their many *peccata*), but instead from Saint John himself, on the condition that Galeazzo give up his plan to punish the previously rebellious community and instead agree to *rectificare* it.[113]

What matters for Morigia are not constitutional considerations but that his *princeps* rules virtuously. This entails a commitment to justice, equality, and even clemency. A full outline of the qualities of the good prince appears elsewhere in the text, with the inheritance of a Roman and medieval language of lordship particularly evident.

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[111] Cermenate, *Historia*, p. 16: *Humanum genus tanta utriusque parentis vitio fragilitate laborat, ut eius misera conditio prona naturaliter et labilis ad peccandum non modo ad conservationem, verum etiam ad esse sui exigat ut iusto et sancto regum supponatur imperio.*
[112] BM, p. 1165: *Quia Princeps est ille, qui est legitime constitutus, et iure divino et humano principatur*. Also see Wales, p. 53.
[113] BM, p. 1142.

...'Mercy and truth preserve the prince, and his throne is strengthened by clemency', [says] Proverbs XX. So a prince ought to be clement, as the justice of equity is in him, without which the *res publica* could not be ruled, nor could it last very long; because as Aristotle [sic, Augustine] said, "without justice, what are kingdoms except dens of robbers?" And because the Prince is the foundation of the people, justice ought to flow from him to others. And because he is the *pater patriae*, all others ought to be ruled and governed by his justice. Therefore because he is the head of the *res publica,* from him justice ought to be seen and considered, and it ought not to be greater or less than it should be. In this the prince serves God, if in his dominion he orders good things and prohibits evils, not only which pertain to man, but to divine religion.[114]

Almost the entirety of the passage is lifted from a chapter by John of Wales titled *Quod sit equus in tenenda iusticia*. The exception is the last line, which nevertheless is consistent with the passage's general sentiments.[115] The emphasis on clemency comes from Proverbs 20.28, though the choice by John of Wales to include the verse at the opening of his chapter was surely influenced by his reading of Seneca's *De Clementia*, frequently cited elsewhere in his text. Like Seneca's idealized Nero, Morigia's prince is more than a disciplinary ruler. His relationship to the *res publica* is paternal, with the prince assuming the role of a *pater patriae*. He is responsible for shepherding the wicked – and, indeed, the *res publica* itself – back to virtue and its divine religion (likewise, Galeazzo's mandate when he received lordship of Monza from Saint John).[116] The remainder of the passage is similarly a mixture of generally Roman and medieval assumptions about lordship. The prince is the foundation of political society and rendered the head of its corporate body.[117] The emphasis on justice evokes its centrality in the Roman and Italian political tradition, which valued justice above all other virtues as the precondition of civic welfare. Morigia (via John of Wales) interrelates justice with equality, recalling Cicero, who likewise acknowledges that equality is necessary for social justice.[118] Unlike the more civically

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[114] Wales, p. 29; BM, p. 1165: *...Misericordia et veritas custodivit Principem, et roboratur clementia thronus eius Proverbiorum XX. Sic debet esse clemens Princeps, ut sit in eo equitatis iustitia, sine qua nulla res publica potesti regi, nec diu durare; quia, prout ait Aristoteles [sic], remota iustitia, quid aliud sunt Regna, nisi latrocinia? Et quia Princeps est fundamentum populi, ab eo debet [e]manare aliorum iustitia, Item quia est pater patriae, ab eo debent regi omnia alia iustitia et gubernari. Iterum quia est caput Reipublicae, ab illo debet illius iustitia prospici et considerari, ne sit maior, quam debeat, et ne sit minor. In hoc serviunt Deo Principes, si in suo dominio bono iubeant, mala prohibeant, non solum quae pertinent ad humanam, sed quae ad divinam Religionem.*

[115] Wales, pp. 33-35.

[116] On Seneca, see Stacey, *Roman Monarchy,* p. 56.

[117] The trope appears in Seneca, though more probably would have entered the medieval lexicon by way of Saint Paul, Augustine, and Chalcidius. See Canning, *Political Ideas*, p. 112.

[118] See Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, pp. 49-51. For the relationship between justice and equity, also see P. Costa, *Iurisdictio: Semantica del potere politico nella pubblicistica medievale* (Milano, 1969), pp. 135-44.

minded Cicero, however, Morigia stresses that the *equitatis iustitia* resides in the prince alone, rendering him singularly necessary for the welfare of the *res publica*.

That said, it can be difficult to fully untangle this representation of the prince from a biblical model of kingship. Both the Roman-Senecan and biblical tradition emphasise the lord's responsibility for justice and each legitimates lordship by appealing to the ruler's virtue and by emphasising his relationship to the divine. But what is particularly Roman about Morigia's discourse is the way that it emphasises the common good of the *res publica* as the ultimate civic value. Morigia uses several terms to describe the community, again appropriating from John of Wales (who in turn relied on Augustine) to also call it a *res populi*, *res Communis*, or *res Civitatis*. Whatever the terminology, it is clarified that the *res publica* is "something shared for common utility" (*utilitatis coniunctione sociatus*), the common good itself.[119] Its welfare trumps individual welfare, with its cultivation the path to individual salvation.[120] Morigia underscores the point with a quotation from Cicero's *Dream of Scipio*, concluding that "all who conserve, aid, and augment their *patria* are certain to be given a place in heaven, where the blessed delight forever."[121] The text thus espouses a fundamentally Stoic conception of the individual's relationship to the community (a concept that had been absorbed over the last hundred years into the social mentality of the Italian commune). But Morigia deviates from the communal tradition, too, by leveraging this concept of community to justify the authority of the prince, whose implied *liberum arbitrium* is fundamentally what sustains the health of the *res publica*, making possible its many social advantages. In invoking the language of *liberum arbitrium*, *clementia,* and *iustitia* and by positioning the *princeps* at the centre of the *res publica*'s moral and physical welfare, Morigia is crystallizing Seneca's own theory of lordship. We must assume he was influenced either by his own reading of Seneca or by the many medieval intellectuals who assimilated his *De Clementia*, John of Wales included.

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[119] BM, p. 1090. Wales, p. 5.
[120] A similar belief appears in *De Bono Communi* of the Florentine Remigio Girolami, whose *ordo caritatis* stressed the individual's religious responsibility to love community over the individual good. M. Kempshall, *The Common Good in Late Medieval Political Thought* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 297-99.
[121] BM, p. 1090: *omnibus, qui patriam conservaverint, adiuvaverint, auxerint, certum esse in coelo diffinitum locum, ubi beati sempiterno aevo fruuntur.* M. Cicero, *Somnium Scipionis*, edited by A. Ronconi (Firenze, 1961).

Lordship in Practice

The exposition of this theory accounts for a couple of brief excursus in Morigia's *Chronicon*.[122] It is also, however, practically expressed across Morigia's narrative, as already illustrated in the anecdote of Giovanni's receipt of lordship over Monza from Saint John. A second case-in-point is the text's account of a meeting convened by a group of Monzese Ghibellines in 1322. The incident features Giovanni Morigia, the Visconti-backed strong man of Monza and a relative of Bonincontro Morigia, and concerns a dispute over communal versus factional values and the role of the lord in arbitrating between the two. In Morigia's record of events, the meeting begins with the Ghibellines listening to the recitation of a letter detailing the capture of Piacenza by Guelph troops. The letter implores the Ghibellines of Monza to remain in concord, betraying a fear that the loss of Piacenza may so break the confidence of the party as to provoke civil war. Events would justify this concern. The meeting turns into a heated debate over the leadership of Giovanni Morigia, whose apparent crime is to promote several Guelphs to offices in Monza's Ghibelline government. Giovanni's critics charge that their promotions came at the expense of worthy Ghibellines. "In this land you diminished our friends and exalted our enemies", one decries. "Like a prince, you exalted whomever you wanted."[123] The critics question Giovanni's judgement. The promoted Guelphs conspired to overthrow Monza's predominantly Ghibelline government (forcing Giovanni to imprison the conspirators in a tower dungeon).

Giovanni retained a few supporters. One offers that Giovanni ought not be blamed for the Guelphs' betrayals, which were unpredictable and "the greatest shock to our prince and to any of his friends in this land".[124] Giovanni's most convincing defender, and the final speaker in the council meeting, reminds his peers that Giovanni sought to champion the common good by promoting the Guelphs and wanted only to protect the *res publica* from "those who desired and wanted to rule alone in the republic, not through correcting evil customs, but by deviating into worse

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[122] BM, pp. 1090-1, 1165-66.
[123] BM, p. 1122: *...in hac Terra depressistis amicos eius, et exaltastis inimocos...Sed vos, prout Princeps in Terra Modoetiae exaltastis, quos voluistis.*
[124] BM, p. 1122: *Nam ipsi, qui sunt in turre, cum non molestarentur, sed essent aequales, et maiores aliorum Terrae suae, prout dicitis, minus habebant causam iniquam agendi: quod fuit maximus horror praedicto quondam Principi nostro, et cuilibet huius Terrae amico suo, et ipsi dignius potuerunt puniri.*

customs" (a-not-so-subtle jibe at Giovanni's critics).[125] After these words, the assembly breaks into chaos, with Giovanni's detractors leaving the scene.

Morigia's account provides a rare glimpse into the often divisive politics of the assembly. Giovanni's detractors held that Monza's offices (*honores*) ought to be the preserve of the Ghibellines, who were the first men (*primi*) of the *burgus*. *Unitas* was valued, but only in the context of the Ghibelline *pars* itself, on the assumption that to incorporate the Guelphs as equal members of Monza's political community would be harmful to the Ghibellines and Visconti. The argument comes from one Herecho Liprando:

> As has been said, Giovanni did not do well when he oppressed in this land those who ought to be first, for the sake of exalting those who are naturally opposed to our party. And on this point we have the example of those who were placed in the tower. When Giovanni made them equals, as was said, they were made ungrateful wanting to do evil against the state of our prince [the Visconti] and our state... Nevertheless, it is better to dismiss our hatred and for us [the Ghibelline party] to come to unity.[126]

There is a notable absence of any Roman concept of the *patria* or *res publica* either in Liprando's speech or – indeed – in the speeches made by any of Giovanni's other detractors. Their language is the zero-sum discourse of factionalism. The strongman of Monza, Giovanni, is conceptualized as merely a servant of these party interests. When he promotes the Guelphs, one critic disparages him for ruling *prout princeps*, pejoratively suggesting that his attempt to remedy political balances, whatever the virtue of his approach, was beyond his mandate.

The tenor changes in the arguments made by Giovanni's supporters, which invoke many of the themes found in Morigia's theoretical discussion of lordship. They affirm the necessity of Giovanni's strongman rule, contending that the behaviour of Giovanni benefited the health of the *res publica*, since his distribution of *honores* guaranteed political equality, a precursor for social stability. So reasons Jacopo Riboldo, an ally of Giovanni: "Those who are in the tower, so that they should not be molested but be equals, [...] had less reason to do evil".[127] The emphasis on *aequitas*

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[125] BM, p. 1123: *ad communem utilitatem voluerunt obviare ad superbiam illorum de hac Terrae, qui aliquando apud se nolunt in communi utilitate aliquem socium, nec amicum; sed soli voluerunt, et cupierunt regnare in Republica, non malos mores corrigendo, sed per peiores deviando*

[126] BM, pp. 1122-23: *Johannes non bene, prout dictum est, egit, cum fecerit in hac Terra deprimere, qui debuissent esse in Communi primi, causa exaltandi illos, quo a natura habent contrarietatem parti nostrae. At de hoc non habemus exemplum de illis, qui positi sunt in turre. Cum fecerit eos aequales, ut dictum est, ingrati facti sunt volendo contra statum Principis nostri et nostrum agere malitiam...Melius tamen, dimissis omnibus odiis, nobis est venire ad unitatem.*

[127] BM, p. 1122: *Nam ipsi, qui sunt in turre, cum non molestarentur, sed essent aequales...minus habebat causam iniquam agendis.*

recalls Morigia's earlier reliance on Ciceronian thought to assert the relationship of equality as a precursor to social welfare. What distinguishes Giovanni's supporters and their critics is not only different attitudes toward the Guelphs, but also a division between their factional and communal system of values. What is important to Giovanni's supporters, as expressed by another supporter of the strongman, Franzio Balirono, is the *communis utilitas*.[128]

Morigia uses the anecdote to promote the communitarian language inherent in his conceptualization of princely lordship. To be sure, Giovanni Morigia was careful not to call himself a prince, with his political authority owed more to his close relationship to the Visconti than any sanctioned office.[129] In a bid to underplay his unofficial leadership of the community, he describes his role in modest terms: "I myself want to be in the middle of you (*in medio*) and other friends, not as a superior, but as a middle man, governing from high to low."[130] And yet, Giovanni is represented in terminology that evokes the duties and virtues of a prince, implying that he was a prince in all but name. Like the ideal prince of Morigia and John of Wales, Giovanni is said to "combat evils" (*obviando malis*) and "give health to the republic" (*salutem dedit ad rempublicam*). So, too, his personal qualities are princely. "Amongst the magnates of Lombardy", Morigia proudly relates, "the virtue and prudence of Giovanni was recognized". [131] The praise for *prudentia* recalls its significance to Martin of Braga and several other medieval theorists working in the Roman vein of political thought, who understood it to be the most important of the political-moral virtues, a fundamental precondition for good lordship.[132] By contrast, Giovanni's critics are not only associated with an illegitimate system of factional values, but are accused of acting with pride and envy, recalling the vices previously identified as preventing the exercise of *liberum arbitrium* in the *universitas populorum*.[133]

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[128] BM, p. 1123.
[129] Giovanni's case is a typical example of local actors relying on the patronage of the signoria to exercise political power. For a comparison with the Florentine regional state, see P. Salvadori, "Florentines and the Communities of the Territorial State" in W. Connell and A. Zorzi (eds.) *Florentine Tuscany: Structures and Practices of Power* (Cambridge, 2000). Giovanni's own close relationship with the Visconti is alluded to on several occasions, see BM, p. 1124.
[130] BM, p.1121: *ego quidem in medio vestrum et aliorum amicorum, non ut maior, sed ut junior esse volo, ministrando a maiori usque ad minorem*.
[131] BM, p. 1124: *Coram magnatibus Lombardiae prudentia et virtus Johannis nominata fuit...*
[132] Skinner, *Visions of Politics* p. 62.
[133] BM p. 1123.

The proceedings of the council debate help to clarify Morigia's understanding of lordship. What legitimates Giovanni is not his office but his virtues, and what justifies his political actions is not popular consensus but social welfare. Above all, what sanctions his political primacy is the wickedness and self-destructive politics of the community. Even Giovanni's own Ghibelline party, Morigia demonstrates, is disunited, with many of its members incapable of valuing the common good over their selfish interests. Giovanni is therefore rendered a legitimate as well as necessary agent for nurturing justice, offering promise for the community's salvation.

Alas, Morigia does not focus on any comparable political controversy to exemplify the prerogatives of the Visconti signoria. He does, however, demonstrate that the Visconti at least possess the political virtues necessary for augmenting the *res publica*. Galeazzo, for example, is praised "for bringing great justice to the republic [of Monza]."[134] Azzone “clothes himself with the arms of justice, mercy, grace, and alacrity”; and “he enriches his subjects by his works”, so that his people regard him “not as a tyrant, but a prince”.[135] Furthermore, Azzone is "obedient to God and the Church", Morigia recounts. "He upholds the virtuous principate for the honour of God and welfare of the populus, repressing evils and ordering the good." [136] The flattering description is adapted from John of Wales, in his chapter *de virtutibus principandi*.[137]

Tyranny

The Visconti's virtue renders them not only good lords for the Milanesi and Monzesi, but indeed all Lombards, particularly those oppressed by tyrants. Morigia's portrayal of tyranny represents the corollary to his portrait of the good lord. The existence of the tyrant, rather than demonstrating the risks of entrusting too much power in one man, is instead used to make a case for the virtuous governance of the Visconti. As we conclude our section on lordship, it is worth investigating more fully Morigia's discussion of tyranny and how it serves to indirectly promote the lordship of the Visconti signoria.

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[134] BM, p. 1144: *magnam iustitiam in republica dictae Terrae posuit.*
[135] BM, pp. 163-4: *induit se armis iustitiae, misericordia, gratia, et alacritate; laetificavit subitos suos in operibus suis...Et de sua mansuetudine, fama, et virtute, narrabant omnes populi: eo quia non ut Tyrannus, seu impius, Principatum tenebat, sed ut Princeps.*
[136] BM, p. 1164: *...scilicet ut obediens Deo et Ecclesiae ad exequendum virtuosum principatum ad Dei honorem, et populi commoditatem, mala cohibendo, bona iubendo.*
[137] Wales, p. 20: *...ut scilicet sit obediens Deo et ecclesie et ad exquendum* [sic] *utriusque imperium, ad Dei honorem et populi commoditatem, mala cohibendo, bona iubendo.*

Any discussion of tyranny is premised on several recurring questions. What qualifies a ruler as a tyrant? How should a community respond to tyranny? Though the definitions of tyrant varied in the early Trecento, most tended to rely on a Roman treatment of the topic. Giovanni Cermenate and Florentine writers stressed the iniquity of usurping communal *libertas*.[138] The filo-Visconti jurist Alberico da Rosate, writing in the 1330s, drew on John of Salisbury (who in turn drew on Roman texts) to define tyranny as the perversion of divine and natural justice.[139] (It is not until Bartolo that jurists draw on the Aristotelian tradition to classify tyrants *ex defectu tituli*).[140]

Morigia's thinking tends to resemble Alberico's, as he relies on an adaptation of John of Wales to present the tyrant as someone who "oppresses rights, submits the laws to his will, and abandons justice and mercy."[141] Morigia was no jurist, however, so the resemblance to Alberico speaks merely to their common reliance on the Roman tradition and the convenience of a definition that avoids constitutional questions of legitimacy (the absence of vicariates troubled the Visconti signoria intermittently throughout the Trecento). Each also avoids any reference to *libertas*, a word – connoting the ancient privileges of the commune – that apologists for the signoria would not feel confident invoking until the end of the Trecento (see chapter on Musso). Morigia's understanding of tyranny receives further clarification in his portrait of the Rusconi of Como, the tyrants *par excellence* of his text.

The Rusconi ruled over Como up till 1335, when Franchino Rusca was removed from power by Azzone, who used his reconciliation with the church as a pretext to support Guelph opponents of the Ghibelline regime.[142] This *volte-face* must

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[138] For Florence, see N. Rubinstein, "Florence and the Despots: Some Aspects of Florentine Diplomacy in the Fourteenth Century", in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (1952) and W. Bowsky, "Henry of Luxemburg, King of the Romans: The Rebirth of Guelfism" *Speculum,* 33 (1958). For Cermenate's understanding of *libertas* and tyranny, see his representation of the so-called tyrant Nicolò dei Bounsignori in Cermenate, *Historia*, p. 42.

[139] D. Quaglioni, "Nembrot primus fuit tyrannus. Tiranno e tirannide nel pensiero giuridico-politico del Trecento italiano: il commentato a C. i, 2, i 6 di Alberico da Rosate", *Annali dell'Istituto italiano per gli Studi Storici*, 6 (1979/80), especially p. 94-5. on Alberico's personal service to the Visconti as an ambassador to the papal curia, see G. Colleoni, "Alberico da Rosciate e le sue ambascierie", *Rivista di Bergamo*, 6 (1927), pp. 5-12.

[140] On the definitions for tyranny *ex defectu tituli* or *ex parte exercitii*, see D. Quaglioni, *Politica e diritto nel Trecento italiano: il 'De tyranno' di Bartolo da Sassoferrato*, (Firenze, 1983), p. 48-55. Also see M.A. Falchi Pellegrini, *Legittimità, legittimazione e resistenza nelle teoria politica medioevale Bartolo da Sassoferrato e Colucio Salutati* (Genova, 1981), pp. 43-8.

[141] BM, p. 1165: *Tyrannus dicitur, qui in communi Republica non iure principatur, iura deprimet, et voluntati suae leges submittit, iustitiam, et misericordiam deserit.*

[142] For an overview, see F. Cognasso, "Visconti e Scaligeri", in *Storia di Milano*, 5 (Milano, 1955), pp. 260-1.

have come as a shock, considering that only years earlier, during his war with the papacy, Azzone had been an ally of the Rusconi. Morigia legitimates Azzone's betrayal by painting the Rusconi as tyrants. Writing about Franchino, Morigia stresses that "justice did not emanate from him as from a father of his country; justice was always missing from his dominion, since he did not order the good nor prohibit evil."[143] The language is a reworking into the negative of Morigia's earlier description of the good prince (based, of course, on John of Wales).[144] Morigia describes the effect of this lordship on the state of Como:

> For that reason in his city there was nothing except robberies, by which anyone who every day comitted robberies, homicides, plunders, and despoilations, in his dominion were safe.[145]

Once again Morigia's excursus on the *princeps* is recalled, which quoted Augustine to warn that states without justice were merely dens of thieves. A tyrant is not only himself corrupt, he corrupts the virtue of the *res publica*. The assumption functions to condemn the tyrant while affirming the centrality of a good prince to the welfare of the *res publica*.

So what, then, should be done about tyrants? Different theorists had different prescriptions. John of Wales, relying on John of Salisbury, had defended a right of resistance for the oppressed *populus*.[146] But this was a solution that had few proponents among those close to government. Alberico, despite his own reliance on John of Salisbury, cautions that a prince must be obeyed, even when he exceeds his remit. If a prince should sin, he would be judged by God.[147] Even Bartolo, despite his extensive critique of tyranny in northern Italy, argued that it was the duty of the superior (i.e. the empire or papacy) to depose a tyrant.[148] Morigia again resembles the juristic position without relying on it directly. Suspicious of the popular rabble, he relieves the people of any obligation to be tyrant slayers. But with the empire in Lombardy still defunct, he boldly looks to the regional state and the Visconti themselves, particularly Azzone, to save Lombardy from tyranny. This becomes his

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[143] BM, p. 1166: *non ut a patre patriae iustitia ab eo emanavit, semper a sua dominio remota fuit iustitia non bona iubebat, nec mala prohibebat.*
[144] For sake of comparison, see BM, p. 1165: *a iustitia debet [e]manare aliorum iustitia, Item quia est pater patriae... in hoc serviunt Deo Principes, si in suo dominio bono iubeant, mala probibeant*
[145] BM, p. 1166: *Ideo in Civitate sua non erant nisi latrocinia, qua quotidie qui faciebant latrocinia, homicidia, praedas, et spolia, in suo dominio salvi erant.*
[146] Wales, pp. 53-54.
[147] K. Pennington, *The Prince and the Law, 1200-1600: Sovereignty and Rights in the Western Legal Tradition* (Oxford, 1993), p. 115.
[148] Quaglioni, *Politica e diritto,* p. 58. Costa, *Iurisdictio*, p. 372.

justification for all of Azzone's conquests, including that of Bergamo, Cremona, Brescia, Lodi, Piacenza, Novara, and Vercelli, as well as – of course – Como.[149]

The originality of this argument is striking when contrasted with Fiamma's justifications for Visconti conquest. The conquest of Como, for instance, is legitimated as having taken place in accordance with the wishes of Franchino Rusca, who transferred lordship to Azzone in order to protect his city from an insurrection by the bishop of Como (technically true, but Fiamma omits that this was only threatening to Franceschino because the Visconti were preventing military aid from reaching him).[150] Morigia, however, justifies the Visconti's acquisition of Como as a moral response to tyranny. The argument, in fact, is even bolder than the one put forth by the Visconti themselves, who were content with merely citing the negligence (but not the tyranny) of the Rusconi as their justification for the change in lordship. In the city's act of dedication of 4 September 1335, whose language was drafted by the Visconti chancellery, the *defectus rectoris* is cited as responsible for the city passing to ruin (*sit passa ruinam*) and falling into civil war (*civili bello lacerata*), leading Como's *cives* to elect Azzone as their new lord.[151] Morigia's history identifies Ruchino as more actively responsible for Como's ills, while omitting that the citizens of Como *elected* the Visconti. For Morigia, it was the innate virtue of the regime alone that justified its lordship, with institutional legitimizations (i.e. popular election) entirely ignored.

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The specifics of Morigia's *Chronicon* are idiosyncratic, but the wide contours of his political discourse are not. Compare, for instance, the text's defence for a form of princely governance with that espoused by the preambles of other statutes of dedication, each drafted by the Visconti chancellery at the moment of the community's submission to the signoria. By the mid Trecento, statutes were effectively annulling the principle of popular sovereignty to instead legitimate the signore as God's chosen agent, enabling what Cengarle rightly identifies as a transition from the conceptualization of the Visconti regime from a *regimen politicum*

[149] BM, pp.1163-4.
[150] Galvano Fiamma, "Opusculum de rebus gestis ab Azone, Luchino et Iohanne, vicecomitibus ab a. 1328 ad a. 1342", in C. Castiglioni (ed.) *RIS*, 12/4 (Bologna, 1938), p. 18.
[151] Cengarle, "Le arenghe dei decreti viscontei", p. 60. G. Manganelli (ed.) *Statuti di Como del 1335*, I (Como, 1936), p. 17.

to a *regimen regale*.[152] Coterminous to this, Alberico asserted the *potestas absoluta* of the prince, which allowed him to derogate from law with or without just cause. Another Visconti jurist, Signorolo degli Omodei, recognized for the Visconti a remit equivalent to imperial authority, concluding that "what pleases the prince has the force of law".[153] Only a few years later, Bernabò Visconti would voice the argument in no uncertain terms: "I am the pope and emperor and lord in all my lands, and that neither the emperor, or indeed God, could do anything in my lands except what I want and intend to do".[154] Morigia's language is less juristic, but achieves the same ends. There were many ways to justify absolutism.[155]

The signoria and its immediate supporters were not alone in this embrace of regal lordship. Outside Milan, support for regal government was maturing from at least the end of the second decade of the 14th century, as is famously attested by the statement of a Parmigiano Guelph who was asked to share his political views with two papal legates, opining that “there will hardly or never be peace in Lombardy unless it has a king and natural lord of its own, who is not of a barbarian nation and whose kingdom continues through perpetual natural succession”.[156] The statement is undoubtedly a call for local kingship, prompted by the civil wars caused by the spectacular failure of Henry VII to reassert imperial authority in Italy a few years earlier. There is some indication that Morigia's compatriots, too, were influenced by a widespread desire for regal sovereignty, as evidenced by the retention of a provision in Monza's statutes for the consideration of rebellion as a *crimen lesae maiestatis*. The provision only makes sense if Monzese legislators believed that their lords, the Visconti, indeed possessed *maiestas*, a distinction that would render them juristically equivalent to an emperor.[157]

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[152] Cengarle, "Il reato politico", pp. 72-3.
[153] On Alberico, see L. Prosdocimi, "Alberico da Rosciate e la giurisprudenza italiana nel secolo XIV", in *Rivista di storia del diritto italiano,* 29 (1956). On Signorolo, see J. Black, *Absolutism in Renaissance Milan: Plenitude of Power under the Visconti and Sforza* (Oxford, 2009), p. 61.
[154] F. Cognasso, "Istituzioni comunali e signorili di Milano sotto i Visconti", in *Storia di Milano*, p. 537: *Ego sum Papa et Imperator ac Dominus in omnibus terris meis, et quod nec imperator, imo nec Deus, posset in terris meis facere, nisi quod vellem ac intendo quod faciat.*
[155] Not mentioned has been the Aristotelian-Thomistic mileaux, whose influence on statutes of dedication has been emphasised in Cengarle, "Le arenghe dei decreti viscontei".
[156] S. Riezler (ed.), *Vatikanische Akten*, n. 4 (Innsbruck, 1891), p. 37: *vix aut nunquam patria Lombardie pacem habebit, nisi habuerunt regem unum proprium et naturalem dominum, qui non sit barbare nationis, et regnum eius continuet naturalis posteritas successiva...*
[157] Contrarily, Storti Storchi agues that this could not have been applied to the Visconti precisely because they did not possess de iure maiestatis. See Storti Storichi, "Statuti di Monza", p. 207.

Morigia declines to explicitly afford the Visconti regal power. The language of his *Chronicon*, however, channels a monarchical ideology by ignoring institutional constraints on the exercise of political power, stressing the signore's absolute responsibility over *iustitia*, emphasising the inability of a *populus* to govern itself, and investing the Visconti with a divine mandate to rule. What is especially significant about the *Chronicon* is that it should articulate this discourse despite originating from the contado. Insofar as the preambles of statutes of dedication or juristic defences of princely prerogative are not merely assertions of authority but vehicles used by the regime for shaping the way that the signoria was conceived, the *Chronicon* is proof of local urban elites' willingness to accept, and to formulate in autonomous ways, the regime's quasi-regal discourse.[158]

And yet, we should perhaps be surprised by Morigia's embrace of Visconti regalism. The history of the localities of the regional state, as has been repeatedly observed, has been one of rejection of the imperiousness of the signoria and one of jealous conservation of local rights.[159] Such attitudes certainly exist in Morigia's text, which explains his rather equivocal position on the regional state. On one hand, the text is a sophisticated argument for the sovereignty of the Lombard *gens*, premised on the intimate relationship that allegedly existed between the Lombards and the divine, though the *Chronicon* is careful not to repudiate the lordship of the emperor or pope. The Maccabees analogy helps fuel this discourse, functioning to overlay biblical themes of political liberation onto the memory of the Visconti's conflict with the papacy. At the core of this language is an appeal to a Lombard *wir-Gefühl,* based on a shared political, legal, and literary culture. This discourse is put to clear use validating

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[158] See A. Gamberini, "The language of politics and the process of state-building: approaches and interpretations", in A. Gamberini and I. Lazzarini (eds.) *The Italian Renaissance State* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 417- 423.

[159] The literature on this topic is extensive and cannot be fully summarized here. For an overview, see G. Chittolini, "Statuti e autonomie urbane. Introduzione", in G. Chittolini and D. Willoweit (eds.) *Statuti città territori in Italia e Germania tra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna, 1991). For a case-study of a single *civitas* (Reggio), see A. Gamberini, "La forze della comunità" in *Lo Stato Visconteo: Linguaggi politici e dinamiche constituzionali: Leggi e decreti a Reggio in età viscontea* (Milano, 2005) and L. Turchi, "Una piccola modifica: il linguaggio della negazionazione politica fra principe e città", in G. Badini and A. Gamberini (eds.) *Medioevo Reggiano: Studi in ricordo di Odoardo Rombaldi* (Milano, 2007). Della Misericordia's work on alpine Lombardy has demonstrated the capability of rural communities to preserve autonomies, too. See M. Della Misercordia, "<<Uno officiale per gubernare questo paese>>. Considerazioni a proposito della giustizia dello stato e della comunità a partire dalle valli lombarde nel tardo medioevo", in M.N. Covini, M. della Misericordia, A. Gamberini, and F. Somaini (eds.) *Medioevo dei poteri: Studi di storia per Giorgio Chittolini* (Roma, 2012), pp. 250-258. M. Della Misericordia, "Decidere e agire in comunità nel XV secolo", in A. Gamberini and G. Petralia (eds.) *Linguaggi politici nell"Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2007), pp. 349-353.

the territorial lordship of a native ruling family as a return to more ancient models of Lombard governance. What makes Morigia's textual programme significant, however, is not so much its validation of a Lombard territorial state, but its manipulation of the concept to validate Monza's sense of privileged exceptionalism within it. Despite the regional appeal of a Lombard identity, the *wir-Gefühl* evoked by Morigia's text drew its meaning primarily from the context of local experience, particularly the institutional memory of the basilica of Saint John.

This is not so different from the ways that other communities invoked the Lombard past. In Pavia, the Dal Verme codex of the late 14th-century projects a powerful sense of Lombard-ness**,** drawing from several texts on the history of the ancient Lombard kingdom. But as with Morigia's history, its articulation of a shared Lombard identity was conditioned by a predominantly local purpose, affirming a royal pedigree for Pavia, once the Lombard kingdom's capital and, at the time of the codex's composition, an up-and-coming administrative centre of the territorial state.[160]

None of this should suggest that Morigia was antagonistic to the Visconti signoria or its pretensions to a regal territorial dominion. Quite the contrary, the text is very much supportive of the signoria and its monarchical ambitions, but merely in a way that was compatible with local designs (as well as – certainly – the private interests of the Morigia family, who benefited from Visconti patronage). Not all chroniclers of Visconti Lombardy were so accommodating. Our next historian, Pietro Azario of Novara, is an altogether more sceptical writer, less convinced of the congruity of interests between centre and periphery and far more jealous of the sovereignty of the *populus*. It is to his histories that we now turn.

[160] Majoochi, *Pavia città regia,* pp. 212-4. See the appendix of Majoochi for a transcription of the codex.

Chapter 3: The Populist Histories of Pietro Azario

On 18 June 1358, the people of Novara assembled in the public square outside their cathedral to hear an address by Francesco Petrarch, at the time a courtier of the Visconti. By force of treaty, Novara had returned to the lordship of Galeazzo Visconti, having spent the last two years subject to the marquis of Montferrat. What the Novaresi might have thought about the change of master is unclear, though they had reason to worry that the regime might retaliate for their participation in several of the marquis's raids on the Milanese countryside.[1] But in the event, Galeazzo acted mercifully, and chose Petrarch to articulate the reasons for his grace. The resulting speech was a *tour-de-force* of biblical exegesis and partisan polemic, ascending beyond the requirements of the day to confront deeper themes on the meaning of lordship, conversion, and civic identity.[2]

Convertetur populus meus hic, Petrarch began, invoking Psalms 73.10. "These were words said by King David about his people of Israel and now could be said by Galeazzo about his people of Novara."[3] Petrarch proceeded to deconstruct the verse, applying its meaning to Novara's experience. *Convertetur* referred to Novara's reversion from error; *meus*, to the Visconti's ancient ownership of Novara; *hic*, to the Visconti's pronounced affection for the Novaresi. But in a speech about repentance, mercy, and lordship, Petrarch's elucidation of the meaning of *populus* might have appeared a digression. Petrarch rhetorically asks: *Quid sit populus*? and answers that it is not merely a demographic configuration; rather, as Cicero and Augustine define it, "a *populus* is a multitude bound by a consensus of law and tied to the common good."[4] The formation of

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[1] P. Azario, *Chronicon de Gestis Principum Vicecomitum*, in L.A. Muratori (ed.), *RIS*, 16 (Milano, 1730), p. 368.

[2] For the speech, see A. Hortis, *Scritti inediti di Francesco Petrarch* (Trieste, 1874) or for the Italian translation, see C. Negroni*, Francesco Petrarch a Novara e la sua arringa ai novaresi* (Novara, 1876). For a summary, E. Wilkins, *Petrarch's Eight Years in Milan* (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 167-9 and M. Feo, "L'epistola come mezzo di propaganda", in P. Cammarosano (ed.) *Le forme della propaganda politica nel Due e nel Trecento* (Roma, 1994), pp. 219-21.

[3] Hortis, *Scritti inediti*, p. 342: *Verba fuerunt hec david Regis loquentis de populo suo israel et nunc possunt verba esse domini Galeacij loquentis de populo suo noveriensi...*

[4] Hortis, *Scritti inediti*, p. 343: *Voluit enim populum esse non omnem cetum multitudinis sed cetum iuris consensu et utilitatis communione sociatum.*

a *populus* is something that happens *libenter*, though Petrarch acknowledges there are times when a *populus* is forced into unity.[5]

Petrarch cites Augustine and Cicero as authorities for this definition, but his rhetoric is rather more Aristotelian. The Greek influence (no doubt mediated by Aquinas) appears in the admission that citizens generally come to the common good *libenter*, evoking Aristotle's understanding of the natural ability of a *populus* to organize itself. It is almost as an afterthought that Petrarch considers the alternative that a people might be forcefully united, an argument that ultimately derives from the Roman concept of the coercive *vir sapiens*, a mythologised lawmaker that emerges at the dawn of a nation's formation to convince the anarchic rabble, in Cicero's words from *De Inventione*, "to keep faith, follow the rules of justice and work for the common good".[6] Two political traditions are thus intertwined in Petrarch's exegesis for *populus*, with the effect of redefining the relationship between *populus* and lord. If a *populus* can come together *libenter*, the lord no longer inhabits the essential role suggested of him by other partisans of the signoria, Bonincontro among them, who called the prince the *fundamentum populi*. Petrarch's prince is left to legitimate himself by other means.

For that reason, Petrarch does not legitimate the signoria with the language of absolutism. A divine mandate is not invoked to justify its rule, nor is the signoria exalted for its superior capacity to govern, strategies hitherto used by the regime's proponents (see previous chapter). Instead Petrarch emphasises the close relationship between the Visconti and the Novaresi. There was not, nor ever had been, Petrarch contends, a moment when there existed a conflict between the local *populus* and the Visconti signoria. But what of the former's raids on Milan's hinterland? Petrarch categorically dismisses their significance as having been made out of duress, maintaining that the Novaresi always remained faithful to their former masters in spirit if not in action.[7] The speech ends with the Novaresi absolved from sin, and the Visconti mercifully accepting them back into their custody – not just as a *populus*, but as a *populus peculiaris* – a

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[5] Hortis, *Scritti inediti*, p. 343: *Quo civitates appelantur, que omnia nulli civitati aut populo conveniunt quam huic qui libenter omni tempore nisi neccessitate aliqua coactus et communi utilitati studet et legibus equis.*

[6] Q. Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, 2 (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 54-55. Cicero, *De Inventione*, translated by H.N. Hubbell (London, 1949), c. I.II.2, p. 6: *ut fidem colere et iustitiam retinere...[et laborare] communis commodo causa*.

[7] Hortis, *Scritti inediti*, p. 354.

phrase that derives from Deuteronomy to imply a privileged union between the Novaresi and their political masters, analogous to God's selection of the Jews as his chosen people.[8]

While the intention of the oration is to legitimate the restoration of Visconti lordship, its respect for Novara's civic identity is its most salient feature.[9] It matters, for instance, that Petrarch does not address particular factions, but instead speaks to a singular and politically empowered community.[10] This is a departure from the mindset present in the histories of Fiamma, which recognised the *civitas* as the sum of its factional parts, each with a separate relationship to a lord held in common. The language, as we have already noted, also deviates from the absolutism of Morigia's *Chronicon*. Petrarch's rhetoric is altogether more republican, citing the enduring fidelity of the Novaresi (as a singular, collective entity) as an important component of the Visconti's own legitimacy.[11]

A respect for local sovereignty might seem surprising in a speech made by an ambassador from the Visconti court. Since the 1330s, the signoria had eschewed republican language, ordaining itself as the source of local *iura* and asserting a right to make and correct statutes and to arbitrarily abrogate law via its *plenitudo potestatis*.[12] We witnessed in previous chapters a clear outline for this language of absolutism. In the 1350s to 1370s, however, this rhetoric was moderated by a renewed emphasis on the sanctity of local *iura* and *statuta*, a development highlighted in the recent work of

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[8] Deut. vii. 6. Compare this to Morigia's *Chronicon Modoetiense*, which also adapts the rhetoric of Jewish exceptionalism.

[9] R. Dessi, "I nomi dei guelfi e ghibellini da Carlo I d'Angiò a Petrarch", in M. Gentile (ed.) *Guelfi e ghibellini nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2005), pp. 58-60.

[10] For the various ways in which the signoria defined its local interlocutors, see (for Cremona), M. Gentile, "From Commune to Regional State: Political Experiments in Fourteenth Century Cremona", in B. Paton and J. Law (eds.) *Communes and Despots in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Farnham, 2010), p. 102; (for the region around Como), see M. Della Misericordia, "Decidere e agire in comunità nel XV secolo", in A. Gamberini and G. Petralia (eds.) *Linguaggi politici nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2007), pp. 316-22; (for Reggio), see A. Gamberini, *La città assediata: Poteri e identità politiche a Reggio in età viscontea* (Roma, 2003), pp. 66-71.

[11] On the manner in which this pseudo-republican ideology influenced the relationship between the signoria and its subjects, see G. Soranzo, "Collegati, raccomandati, aderenti negli Stati italiani dei secoli XIV e XV" in *ASI*, 94 (1941). U. Petronio, "Adhaerentes. Un problema teorico di diritto comune", in *Scritti in memoria di Domenico Barillaro* (Milano, 1982). F. Cengarle, "La comunità di Pecetto contro i Mandelli feudatari (1444): linguaggi politici a confronto", in F. Cengarle, G. Chittolini, and G.M. Varanini (eds.) *Poteri signorili e feudali nelle campagne dell'Italia settentrionale fra Tre e Quattrocento: fondamenti di leggitimità e forme di esercizio* (*Atti del convegno di studi. Milano, 11-12 aprile 2003*, Firenze, 2005).

[12] C. Storti Storchi, "Aspetti generali della legislazione statutaria lombarda in età viscontea", in *Scritti sugli statuti lombardi* (Milano, 2007), pp. 87-93.

Cengarle. Bernabò defended the legal force of communal *iura* against the violations of officials (nevertheless preserving for himself the power to derogate from statutes), while his brother Galeazzo II went so far as to champion local *iustitia mera et pura ac inviolata,* opting for a legalistic approach to the affairs of localities that strictly limited intervention by the Milanese signoria. The *capitoli di dedizioni*, drafted by the regime, also reflect the shift in the philosophy of governance. While continuing to contend for Galeazzo and Bernabò a divine mandate, the *capitoli* also invoked imperial vicariates to affirm the legality of their lordship, a rhetorical shift that suggests that their sovereignty was not entirely innate, but dependent on authority derived from the emperor.[13] Cengarle argues that this was meant to pre-empt the criticisms of Bartolo and his acolytes, who recognized only the empire or *civitates* as possessing true sovereignty, rendering the lord who ruled without concessions of authority a tyrant.[14] It was also a nod to the mindset of local intelligentsia, who, even if lacking a sophisticated legal education, still would have placed value on their communities' ancient rights and liberties. In this context, the speech by Petrarch can be understood as part of a rhetorical strategy to pre-empt local objections to Visconti rule by recasting the signoria's lordship in terms that were respectful to more traditional understandings of sovereignty. It is within this discursive matrix that we can best appreciate the political language found in the histories of Pietro Azario, a Novarese and, indeed, in all likelihood one of those present for Petrarch's speech.[15]

Pietro Azario

Azario was born in Novara in 1312 to a Ghibelline family. He would become a notary, a profession practised by his family since the beginning of the 13th century. He served the Visconti regime in a mid-level capacity since at least 1347, when he can be found doing unspecified work at Borgomanero, a small community north of Novara near Lake Maggiore. The highlights of his rèsumè include four-years notarial service for the Visconti's mercenary army in Bologna (1350-1354), a brief stint in the administration of

[13] F. Cengarle, "Tra maiestas Imperii e maiestas Domini: il vicariato composito di Galeazzo II Visconti", in P. Grillo (ed*.), Signorie italiane e modelli monarchici* (Roma, 2013). A. Gamberini, *Lo stato Visconteo: Linguaggi politici e dinamiche costituzionali* (Milano, 2005), pp. 23-24.
[14] F. Cengarle, "Le arenghe dei decreti viscontei", in A. Gamberini and G. Petralia (eds.), *Linguaggi politici nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2007), pp. 70-3.
[15] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 366.

mercenaries at Milan (1354-6), a couple of years as a contractual hostage in Asti (1357-8), and service for the Visconti podestà in Tortona (1362) and later in Piacenza (1363-4). Less is known about the period between 1358 and 1362, when Azario can be found operating either in Novara or once again in Borgomanero.[16] Locally, his family seems to have enjoyed a modicum of distinction. His uncle served as a podestà in the Piedmont countryside. Twice Azario married into eminent families. The first marriage was to Franceschina dei de Fossato, daughter of a noble Ghibelline house. When she died, Azario remarried into the Tornielli, Novara's leading Ghibelline potentates. Azario would have lived at least through 1367, assuming that it was he (and not a later copyist) who included in the *Chronicon de Gestis* a reference to a royal wedding that took place that year.[17]

Azario wrote two histories. His major work, the *Chronicon de Gestis Principum Vicecomitum,* offers a history of Lombardy from 1250 to 1362 (with a later addition extending the narrative to 1364). The text is almost entirely drawn from first-hand knowledge and oral history, and its content is often dictated by where Azario happened to be at any particular moment. Thus, while it purports to be a history of Visconti deeds in Lombardy, a region which Azario defines as stretching from Asti in the west to Verona in the east to Bologna in the south, its focus really lies on Bologna and northwest Italy. [18] Occasional glimpses into Pavese politics suggest a few trips to the *civitas*, perhaps during the lordship of the Augustinian preacher-cum-demagogue Iacopo Bussolaro. Largely absent from the text, astoundingly for a chronicle nominally about the Visconti, is Milan. So, too, no coverage is given to the politics of the court, though lack of interest in court politics is the norm for contemporary histories.[19]

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[16] Azario's biography is derived only from his *Chronicon*. Zabbia has compiled a useful, though incomplete, list of Azario's self-references in the text. M. Zabbia, *I notai e la cronachistica cittadina italiana nel Trecento* (Roma, 1999), pp. 94-99.

[17] A.M. Nada Patrone, "Azario, Pietro", in *DBI*, vol. 4 (Roma, 1962), pp. 740-2. "Azario Pietro", in *Il notariato nella civilità italiana. Biografie notarili dall'VIII al XX secolo*, edited by il Consiglio Nazionale del Notariato (Milano, 1961).

[18] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 298-99.

[19] For a discussion of this unusual omission, see J. Grubb, "Corte e cronache: il principe e il pubblico", in G. Chittolini, A. Molho, and P. Schiera (eds.) *Origini dello Stato: Processi di formazione statale in Italia fra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna, 1994).

Azario's other history, composed in January 1363, is the *Opusculum de Bello Canepiciano*.[20] This is a shorter work, offering a history of the Canavese, a subalpine and largely rural territory in the northwest of modern Piedmont, the same region where Azario's uncle had served as podestà. The history has been overshadowed by the notary's *Chronicon*, and though this chapter will contribute to this trend, it will occasionally reference its too oft neglected sister text, which crystallizes many of the former history's themes.

History-writing in northern Italy remained vibrant during the 1360s, though the form of historical composition changed. Gone is the civic chronicle limited to recording a city's military and political achievements.[21] The change in tone and perspective is evident in the introduction of Azario's *Chronicon*.

> While staying in the city of Tortona, dulled by idleness, tormented and travailed by the great distresses and pains caused by recent events, and having abandoned my home because of the plague, I have attempted to treat studiously the causes from which the scandals in Lombardy were born. And yet, since recent events ended badly, I will take care to write also of even earlier events, on account of which the state of Lombardy, once happy in wealth and deeds, has been irrecoverably damaged. Readers should not be surprised if this stimulus has forced me to detail and write these things, expressing my narrative *quasi vulgariter*, since I have seen the triumph of so much wickedness, the imposition of so many errors, truth silenced, and only the search for riches.[22]

This phrase – *quasi vulgariter* – heralds something new for Lombard historiography (though the trope itself is not new, recalling the rhetoric of the *sermo humilis* of the early medieval period). Azario intends the phrase to signal the adoption of elements native to vernacular literature. For instance, the *Chronicon* is not organized chronologically, but thematically, with each chapter purporting to focus on either a particular Visconti or rival lord. (Azario, however, frequently digresses from these themes.) In addition, a literary-

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[20] P. Azario, *Opusculum de Bello Canepiciano*, in L.A. Muratori (ed.), *RIS*, 16 (Milano, 1730).

[21] On civic chronicles by notaries, see G. Arnaldi, "Il notaio cronista e le cronache cittadine in Italia", in L. Olschki (ed.) *La Storia del diritto nel quadro delle scienze storiche* (Firenze, 1966). See pp. 308-309 for his conclusion that Azario is unrepresentative of the civic chronicle tradition.

[22] Azario, *Chronicon*, pp. 297-8: *Morans itaque in Civitate Terdonae, consusus otio, cruciatus et exercitatus doloribus et angustiis perimmensis propter occurrentia, fugatus a domo propter morbum, conatus sum causas praecedentes, ex quibus in Lombardia orta sunt scandala, studiosius pertractare. Verumtamen quia male sequentia concluserunt, de praecedentibus etiam scribere curabo, propter quae felix olim Lombardiae status in bonis et rebus inrecuperabiliter iam defecit. Nec mirentur Lectores, si stimulus dictandi et scribendi me coegit, quasi vulgariter exprimendo narranda, quum viderem scelera permulta vigere, errores multiplices suscitari, veritatem non dici, et solummodo divitias procurari.*

novelistic tone is used in several anecdotal passages.[23] Consonant with the novelistic approach, there is also unusual attention given to the condition of non-elites. Recorded in detail are the plight of the besieged and starving foot soldiers of Brettona, the country folk of Magenta terrorised by foreign mercenaries, and a poor peasant whose property is frequently plundered by his lord's henchmen. Laments are common. Words fail Azario when recounting a particularly horrific incident of rape by an enemy army: "Oh how many beautiful women, oh how many widows, oh who many deprived of husbands, as many nobles as commoners, were violated and tortured, without distinction of sex! Half of this evilness could not be described."[24] What we have in Azario are the lamentations of a mid-level functionary, depressed by malgovernance, war, and plague.

Contrary to earlier assumptions, Azario is not a court historian.[25] His texts are more personal – unusually, he even includes his family tree, filling a full page of the manuscript. [26] For that reason, the *Chronicon* may even he called "autobiographical".[27] A useful analogue thus might be the Florentine *ricordanze*, albeit these stress considerably more the personal history of the writer.[28] Nevertheless, like the authors of these texts, Azario is writing his histories for distinctly individual reasons.[29]

To write *vulgariter* thus signals a change in textual perspective and function. In using this 'Latin vernacular', Azario not only abandons the purely political lens of civic chronicles, he appropriates the language necessary to articulate history for a different class of people, the losers of the Visconti political programme. Both the tone and text of Azario's histories are uniquely his own. Azario will occasionally quote a Roman authority (possibly from memory, possibly from a compendium of quotations) or – very rarely – will reproduce a document, but he does not seem to have substantially relied on

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[23] Azario, *Chronicon*, pp. 358-361, 393-6 (to be discussed below).
[24] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 347: *Oh quantae formosae iuvenes, oh quantae viduae, oh quantae privatae maritis, tam Nobiles quam Populares fuerunt vituperate, sine discretione sexus, et taliter subornatae! Nefas illud ad medium non posset describi.*
[25] This is claimed in C. Cogrossi, "Per uno studio intorno alle cronache dei notai ed agli atti notarili nei comuni dell'Italia settentrionale (XII-XIV sec)", in *Ius* 28 (1981), p. 348. Quoted from Zabbia, *I notai*, p. 101.
[26] F. Cognasso, "Prefazione a Petri Azarii", in F. Cognasso (ed.) *RIS*, 16/4 (Bologna, 1925-39), pp. iv-ix.
[27] As it is in G. Andenna, "Autobiografia e storiografia nelle fonti Lombarde", in *L'Autobiografia nel medievo. Atti del XXIV Convegno storico internazionale (Todi, 12-15 ottobre 1997)*, (Spoleto, 1998), pp. 263-73.
[28] The classic introduction to the subject is P.J. Jones, "Florentine Families and Florentine Diaries in the Fourteenth Century", in *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 24 (1956).
[29] Zabbia, *I notai*, pp. 79-84; 153-6.

any texts for the completion of his histories.[30] For this reason, the *Chronicon* and *Opusculum* do not lend themselves to the close intertextual criticisms practised by this thesis in other chapters, which in turn impairs our ability to unpack the rich meanings of Azario's language. More helpful, however, is that Azario is at least an opinionated observer. Criticism is common in Azario's histories. Criticism of lords, criticism of violence, and especially criticism of high taxation, which is generally the distinguishing feature of Azario's tyrants. Like other texts which utilise the vulgate tone, Azario's tend toward subversion. The analysis of his histories' language, narrative frameworks, and thematic elements will be central to the understanding of his texts.

This brings us to the notary's ideology. Azario is a universalist.[31] Nevertheless, he seems to have had little faith in the ability of the empire to manage affairs in Italy. Instead, Azario's political ideal lies in the sovereignty of the community and in particular what he terms the *popularis status*, a conceptualization of a politically empowered corporation of *populares*. The way that Azario treats the relationship between communities and lords, and the way that he uses his histories to negotiate between a concept of popular sovereignty and the authority of the signoria, will be the subject of this chapter, a focus that distinguishes this study from previous work on Azario, chiefly by Zabbia and Andenna.[32] The former focuses on the mechanical and rhetorical elements that Azario's texts share with other notarial histories; the latter, largely on the unique features of Azario's secular approach to history. Our approach instead places Azario's histories into the larger academic debate over the continuation of what are essentially communal modes of thought into the era of the territorial state.[33] The topic will be the subject of the following section. Also valuable is that Azario represents a counter-narrative to the role of historiography in empowering signoria with monarchical rhetoric

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[30] Zabbia comes to the same conclusion: Zabbia, *I notai*, p. 98.
[31] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 299.
[32] Cited above. See also D. Tuniz, "Pietro Azario: proposta di una rilettura", in *Novarien*, 15 (1985).
[33] For overview and bibliography, see G.M. Varanini, "Aristocrazie e poteri nell'Italia centro-settentrionale dalla crisi comunale alle guerre d'Italia", in G. Bordone, G. Castelnuovo, G.M. Varanini (eds.), *Le aristocrazie dai signori rurali ai patriziati* (Roma-Bari, 2004), pp. 137-43. F. Somaini, "Processi costitutivi, dinamiche politiche e strutture istituzionali dello stato visconteo- sforzesco", in G. Andenna, R. Bordone, F. Somaini, and M. Vallerani (eds.) *Comuni e signorie nell'Italia settentrionale: La Lombardia. Storia d'Italia*, 6 (Torino, 1998), pp. 747-63. E.I. Mineo, "Alle origini dell'Italia di antico regime", in E. Artifoni (ed.), *Storia medievale* (Roma, 1998), p. 638. P. Jones, *The Italian City-State: From Commune to Signoria* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 637-8.

– up to now a theme of this thesis. The final section of this chapter will consider the strategies used by Azario to affirm the ideology of the popular commune in a way that contests principles of regal lordship.

Quid sit populus?

The language of Azario's texts articulates the discourse and assumptions common to governments *a popolo*, regimes broadly characterized by their ability to represent the interests of the commercial and high-level manufacturing classes.[34] (This is, at least, the rhetoric of popular government. It is another question whether this was also the reality.)[35] We have already encountered popular language in a Lombard history, namely in Fiamma's *Manipulus Florum*. The friar's text, discussed in the first chapter, is distinctive for its narrative that vilifies the nobility and aggrandizes the *populus*, framed as the only faction capable of promoting the values of urban civilization. The rhetoric is consistent with a wider tradition of popular discourse, employed by notaries, jurists, and various statesmen of the Due- and Trecento. The notary-drafted Sacred Ordinances of Bologna (1282) proposed to check the power of the nobility, pejoratively termed *lupi rapaces*, so that they might co-exist peacefully with the *populus*, the *agni mansueti*.[36] In *On City Government*, the jurist Bartolo argued that, at least in small cities, government by the popular faction was best, specifically observing that in Perugia a *regimen ad populum* served to curtail the abusive power of magnates.[37] In 1390 Florence's chancellor Salutati called the city a *popularis civitas*, observing that it was virtuously dedicated "only to commerce" – as opposed to the landed (and therefore less legitimate) interests of the traditional nobility.[38] Similar tropes for describing and validating popular government are

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[34] On the composition of the populares, see G. Chittolini, "Uno sguardo a ritroso", in G. Delille and A. Savelli (eds.), *Essere popolo. Prerogative e rituali d'appartenenza nelle città italiane d'antico regime* (Firenze, 2000), p. 164.
[35] On the *populus*, see introduction of thesis, pp. 17-18.
[36] See M. Giansante, "I lupi e gli agnelli. Ideologia e storia di una metafora", in *Nuova Rivista Storica* 81 (1997).
[37] Bartolus of Sassoferrato, "Tractatus de Regimine Civitatis", in D. Quaglioni (ed.), *Pensiero Politico,* 9 (1976), pp. 87-9. Bartolus quoted in, A. Black, *Guild and State: European Political Thought from the Twelfth Century to the Present* (London, 2003), p. 83.
[38] H. Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance* (Princeton, 1966), p. 28. E. Garin, "I cancellieri umanisti della Repubblica fiorentina", in *La Cultura Filosofica del Rinascimento Italiano* (Firenze, 1961), p. 14

evoked in Azario's texts, which prefer to term it a *popularis status*. The language is applied to Novara, Pavia, Genoa, and the Canavese.

The precise meaning of Azario's *popularis status* must be unpicked, a task that requires consideration of the terminology's rich pedigree. It first appears in Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's *Politics* and in Peter of Auvergne's continuation, which cite *popularis status* as a translation for what Aristotle calls the illegitimate government of the many, *democratia*.[39] In a more neutral sense, the vernacular version of the term appears in Giovanni Villani, who uses *stato popolare* to mean a government created by the *popolani* against the interests of Florence's *grandi*.[40] Some half a century later the term is utilized by Leonardo Bruni, whose 1413 letter to Emperor Sigismund uses *popularis status* as a translation for an Aristotelian category of government. Unlike Aquinas, however, Bruni uses the term to refer to the *legitimate* rule of the many. He contends that the phrase could be applied to Florence, a *gubernatio popularis*.[41]

There is no evidence that Azario consciously uses *popularis status* with Aristotelian categories of government in mind. Indeed, his usage is less precise than that found in other texts. Consider the term's application to Pavia, quoted below with its broader context.

In olden times…[the house of Beccaria] defended the *popularis status*. These lords entered into a pact with Lord Matteo I to govern the city of Pavia, with the effect that because of the virtue of Lord Matteo the city was seized from the hands of counts and nobles, who subjugated the *populus*. And thus the *pars Comitum*, which is Guelph, holds in friendship the nobles of Pavia

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[39] E.H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, 1957), p. 271n. T. Aquinas, *In libros politicorum Aristotelis expositio* (ed. R.M. Spiazzi) (Torino, 1951), p. 139. For a discussion of the usage of *status* in Italian literature, see the bibliography provided in E.F. Guarini, "Machiavelli and the Crisis of the Italian Republics", in G. Bock, Q. Skinner, and M. Viroli (eds.) *Machiavelli and Republicanism* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 30n.

[40] N. Rubinstein, "Notes on the word *stato* in Florence before Machiavelli", in J.G. Rowe and W.H. Stockdate (eds.) *Floregium Historiale* (Toronto, 1971), pp. 314-16. G. Villani, *Cronica*, (ed. I. Moutier) 4 (Milano, 1848), book 12, chap. 19.

[41] L. Bruni, *Historiarum Florentini populi libri XII e Rerum suo tempore gestarum connentarius*, in E. Santini (ed.) *RIS*, 19/3 (Città di Castello, 1914), p. 27. Bruni was not always consistent with his terminology. In a letter to Flavio Biondo, he uses "popularis status" as a translation for Aristotle's *demokratia*, the illegitimate rule of the many, but in his political treatises and in another letter to the Council of Basle, the other meaning is used. See R. Dees, "Bruni, Aristotle, and the Mixed Regime in 'On the Constitution of the Florentines'", *Medievalia et Humanistica*, 15 (1987), p. 5. N. Rubinstein, "Florentine Constitutionalism and Medici Ascendancy in the Fifteenth Century", in N. Rubinstein (ed.) *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence* (Evanston, 1968), p. 447n.

and the countryside. But the *pars illorum de Beccaria*, as Ghibellines, holds in friendship the *populares* outside of and within the city (which is most of them). [42]

The passage sets up the relationship between Pavia's *populus*, signori, nobility, and Guelph and Ghibelline factions. It distinguishes between the antithetical interests of the *populus* and nobility, and also specifies that the *populares* are primarily of urban origin, features that compare Pavia's *populares* to that of Florence's. But what is the role of the *popularis status* within Pavia? The passage distinguishes between the *popularis status*, which the Beccaria are said to defend, and the *populares*, whom they hold in friendship. The *popularis status* can perhaps be understood as the *populares*' corporate embodiment, though the connection is not made explicit. This usage reflects a subtle difference between the way that Azario conceives of the *popularis status* and the way that others have employed the term. The terminology does not itself connote a regime, though it does imply a uniquely privileged urban group formed in opposition to a rural nobility.

It is this loose sense of the *popularis status* – one that portrays it as a politically empowered corporate body rather than a political regime – that appears in Azario's history of the Canavese.

The contado of the Canavese is similar to the district of Novara, and, just like the contado of this region, the district of Novara preceded the construction of the city of Novara and was not free of nobles, until the *popularis status* usurped these nobles and counts.[43]

The *popularis status* is operating here as a kind of faction, but we should be careful not to conceptualise the *popularis status* as merely a political party. Azario himself distinguishes between these concepts in the above passage about the *popularis status* of Pavia, which distinguishes between a *status* and *pars* by treating as distinct entities the *popularis status* and its affiliated party, the *pars illorum de Beccaria*. The key difference is that *popularis status* carries a greater political resonance. Though not commensurate with a communal regime, it is still a kind organised government, recalling the popular

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[42] Azario, *Chronicon*, pp. 371-2: *Antiquitus [the domus de Beccaria] steterant apud Beccariam, et statum popularem defendebant. Hi Domini foedus cum Domino Matthaeo Primo inierunt de dicta Civitate gubernanda, attento quod virtute eiusdem Domini Matthaei dicta Civitas erepta fuit e manibus Comitum et Nobilium, qui Populum subiugabant. Ideoque pars Comitum, quae Guelpha est, Nobiles Papiae e districtus habet in amicos: pars vero illorum de Beccaria, tamquam Gibellina, Populares ut plurumum intus et extra amicos.*

[43] Azario, *Opusculum*, pp. 425-6: *Est enim comitatus Canepicii similis districtui Novarie et modo huius comitatus districtus Novarie ante fabricationem civitatis Novarie procedebat nec cessaverunt nobiles etiam illi, donec popularis status predictos nobiles, etiam comites, usurpavit…*

societies of the late Duecento and early Trecento whose internal organisation mimicked the structures of communal regimes – complete with their own version of a podestà, the *capitano del popolo*.[44]

Though Azario does not directly ascribe to the *popularis status* any specific institutional structure or nomenclature, he does bestow on it an elevated political significance. The sense is well captured in Azario's description of a popular rebellion in Genoa against the Visconti.

> Once armed, the *populares* of Genoa again made him [Simonino Buccanigra] their duke, podestà, and captain, expelling from the district the rectors of the lords of Milan. And in a short space of time they artfully and forcefully reclaimed the forts subject to the dominion of Genoa. And unanimously, with the assent of the aforesaid duke, they began to rule under the *popularis status*, and they reign up to the present.[45]

Here, the *popularis status* underpins the new regime in Genoa, even though it is a duke (of Genoa, not of the *popularis status*) who effectively holds power. The *popularis status* is similarly aggrandised in the *Chronicon*'s etymology for Novara. Here is the passage in full:

> …it was called *Novaria*, as in *nova* and *varia*. *Nova*, because it was the last city constructed in Lombardy. *Varia*, because it was united into one by the *popularis status* from diverse communities, captains, and other nobles, and because the various groups were afterwards led into one on account of the wars that they waged, one against the other.[46]

Once again, the *popularis status* is portrayed as the foundation of a city, its *sine qua non*.[47] On another occasion, Azario even elides Novara with the *popularis status* itself, explaining that when the growth of Novara threatened the dominance of nobles in the countryside, they responded by "making war on the *popularis status*".[48]

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[44] A. Poloni, "Il comune di popolo e le sue istituzioni tra Due e Trecento. Alcune riflessioni a partire dalla storiografia dell'ultimo quindicennio", in *Reti Medievali Rivista*, 13 (2012). G. Milani, *I comuni italiani* (Roma, 2005), pp. 121-122. E. Artifoni, "Tensioni sociali e istituzioni nel mondo comunale", in N. Tranfaglia and M. Firpo (eds.) *La storia. I grandi problemi dal medioevo all'età contemporanea*, 2 (Torino, 1986), pp. 477-83.

[45] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 346: *Et tunc armata manu Populares Januae iterum ipsum constituerunt in Ducem, Potestatem, et Capitaneum, expellendo e districtu Rectores Dominorum Mediolani. Et brevi temporis spatio artificialiter et potenter quaeque Castra dominio Januensi subiecta vindicarunt: et unanimes, adnitente praefato Duce, sub statu populari coeperunt regnare, et regnant de praesenti.*

[46] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 358. *...dicta fuit Novaria, quasi nova et varia. Nova, quia ultima fuit Civitatum constructarum in Lombardia. Varia quia de diversis Communitatibus, Capitaniatibus, et aliis Nobilibus fuit unita per Popularem statum, et variis propter guerras, alterutrum simul illatas, et in unum postea reductis*

[47] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 361: *et noviter constitutus, et Civitas noviter fabricata, et de vario districtu Nobilium, Novarium appellaverunt.*

[48] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 361.

This aggrandisement of *popularis status* is generally couched in tropes common to popular discourse, in particular anti-magnate rhetoric and a conceptualisation of the *civitas* as a refuge from the nobility's culture of violence. The Genoa passage is an exception. The other passages, however, juxtapose the *populares* and nobility in a way that is sympathetic to the former and stigmatises the latter. This rhetoric appears at its best in Azario's origin story for Novara.

The city, Azario tells us, owes its foundation to a series of events initiated by the pilgrimage of a Frankish noble *de progenie Regali Francorum*.[49] On the way to a Roman jubilee, the noble and his wife delay at a *castrum* near Vercelli, where the latter has an affair with a Lombard gentleman. [50] When the wife absconds with her new lover, the husband raises an army to retaliate, killing his wife and the Lombard seducer, and in his vengeance destroying several of the *castra* of local signori who had allied with the Lombard (two of the *castra*, we are informed, happened to be located on the site of present-day Novara). The noble seeks penitence for his crimes and is instructed by the pope to build a church in a *locus notabilior* within the country he had devastated.[51]

The construction of this church, later to become a cathedral, is the impetus for the formation of the urban settlement that would become Novara. Azario describes the particular conditions that contributed to the growth of the community:

> And then the *homines populares* of nearby places, after being consulted and seeing other places that were reformed, especially those allying under the lordship of cities, decided to construct a city in order to avoid similar dangers of violence and so that the nobles in their passion might not shame their daughters, who dare not to speak.[52]

Medieval origin stories operate on the assumption that origins reveal a *ratio essendi*, locating in its subject's genesis its meaning and social value. The origin story for Novara identifies the city as a space existing for the sake of *populares*. The city is a safe haven against the nobility's culture of violence, exemplified by the bloody revenge

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[49] D. Tuniz, "Un tragico pellegrinaggio di una cronaca del Trecento. La leggenda delle origini di Novara di Pietro Azario", in *Medioevo in cammino: L'Europa dei pellegrini* (*Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi Orta San Giulio, 2-5 Settembre 1987*, Comune di Orta San Giulio, 1989), pp. 373-77.

[50] Azario, *Chronicon*, pp. 358-360. This is ostensibly not the Roman jubilee of 1350 or 1300, but some fabled jubilee of a legendary past.

[51] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 360.

[52] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 361: *Et tunc homines populares locorum adiacentium consilio potiti, et videntes alia loca corrigi, et praecipue sibi adhaerentia sub dominio Civitatum, cogitaverunt Civitatem construere, ut a similibus periculis cesserat eorum interitus, et ut Nobiles eorum filias libidine non foedarent, non audentes loqui.*

inflicted by the Frankish noble on his wife and the Lombard seducer. The story identifies other nobles as similarly dangerous (highlighting, in particular, the sexual predation of signori, a salient fear of *populares*).[53] What the passage does not do, however, is to deconstruct the makeup of its *homines populares*. This is typical of popular rhetoric, which is largely constructed in contrast to an image of violent nobility. The advantage of this ambiguity is to elide into a single classification the interests of a heterogeneous assortment of non-noble classes and factions.[54] For that reason, the passage functions less to promote the particular class interests of merchants or guildsmen or labourers but instead to denounce the militaristic values of a traditional nobility of the countryside.[55] Therefore, the dialectic that the passage supposes is only superficially between *popularis* and *nobilis*. It is really between urban and rural, law and disorder, the culture of coin and the culture of the sword.

As Novara grows, the *popularis status* responds to the nobility's violence by subjugating the rural signori and expanding its influence over the countryside. The nobility retaliate by escalating the conflict. But as in Florence and Bologna, not all rural signori were hostile. The Barbavaria, for instance, compromise with the city. Azario explains the aftermath:

> And they made them *cives* and *nobiles*, and their *castra* and fortifications were restored. And in the city they began to live, and they live there as *boni cives* up to the present day.[56]

The passage assumes that urban citizenship and nobility were not mutually exclusive. Once again, the central dichotomy in Azario's history is shifted from one between *populus* and noble to one between urban citizen and rural lord. This is not to suggest that the nobility do not persist in their role as the *Chronicon*'s predatory other. Azario consistently uses his texts to stigmatise the nobility. But these are nobles who are

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[53] C. Lansing, "Magnate Violence Revisited", in J. Law and B. Paton (eds.) *Communes and Despots in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Farnham, 2010), pp. 40-45.
[54] A. Poloni, "Disciplinare la società. Un esperimento di potere nei maggiori comuni di Popolo tra Due e Trecento", *Scienza & Politica*, 37 (2007), p. 45. A. Poloni, "Fisionomia sociale e identità politica dei gruppi dirigenti popolari nella seconda metà del Duecento. Spunti di riflezione su un tema classico della storiografia comunalistica italiana", *Societá e storia*, 90 (2005). Chittolini, "Uno sguardo a ritroso", pp. 163-4.
[55] J.C. Maire Vigueur, "Il comune popolare", in *Società e istituzioni dell'Italia comunale: l'esempio di Perugia* (*Congresso storico internazionale, Perugia, 6-9 novembre 1985*, 1 (Perugia, 1988), pp. 48-55.
[56] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 362: *Et ipsos Cives et Nobiles fecerunt, restitutis Castris et fortalitiis eorumdem. Et in ipsa Civitate coeperunt permanere, et permanent de praesenti tamquam boni Cives.*

generally representative of the oppression of the countryside. Particularly loathsome are the counts of Biandrate, the commune's ancient enemies, whose memory clearly continued to provoke strong passions in the Trecento:[57]

> Then there was born great discord among the counts of Biandrate, whose house was the most powerful of Novara, since the counts wanted to violate and did violate all the beautiful young women in the Val Sesia. But one day the aforementioned *rustici* of the Val Sesia, after they captured and detained the counts, killed them.[58]

The *rustici* proceed to destroy the *castra pulchra et fortia* of the Biandrate, and then adhere their lands to the *communus Novariae*. Once again the text functions to demonstrate the city's role as a counterweight to rural lords. What follows is a brief list of other territories acquired by Novara: Romagnano, Prato, Serramonte, Grignasco, Ara, among others.[59] Here, Azario's history turns into a substantiation of Novara's claim to the countryside, made all the more necessary by the Visconti signoria's proclivity in the Trecento to alienate urban privileges in the countryside to rural signori.[60] In so doing, Azario's text compares to *libri iurium*, collections of texts, made by notaries like Azario, that documented a community's various rights, particularly over its contado.[61] This function ultimately relates back to the dichotomy between city and countryside.

In effect, Azario's origin story for Novara functions to articulate a collective urban identity, predicated on the *homines populares* and buoyed by the language of popular governance: the *popularis status*. It promotes a set of urban values traditionally associated with the *populares*, though also occasionally upheld by members of the

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[57] On the counts, see P. Guglielmotti, "Unità e divisione del territorio della Valsesia fino al secolo XIV", *Bollettino storico-bibliografico subalpino,* 96 (1998).

[58] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 362: *Deinde orta fuit maxima discordia inter Comites de Blandrato, quorum Domus potentior Novariae erat, pro eo quod dicti Comites universas iuvenes formosas volebant fornicare in Valle Sicidae, et fornicabant. Praedicti autem rustici Vallis Sicidae capta hora ipsos detinendo occiderunt.*

[59] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 362: *Item a Marchionibus de Romagnano acquisiverunt Romagnanum, Pratum, Seramontem, Grignascum, Aram, et plura alia loca. Reliquas autem alias acquisiverunt tam a Consaloneriis quam a Capitaneis, et tunc temporis Casalegium erat districtus Vercellarum, et Casalgualonum districtus Novariae.*

[60] For overview, see G. Chittolini, *Città, comunità e feudi negli stati dell'Italia centro-settentrionale (secoli XIV-XVI)* (Milano, 1996). There is not much on the political structures and organization of the contado of Novara in the Trecento. The few exceptions: M.F. Baroni, *Novara e la sua diocesi nel Medio Evo attraverso le pergamene dell'Archivio di Stato* (Novara, 1981). G. Costamagna and G. Andenna, "Novara e la sua diocesi nel Medio Evo. Riflessioni in margine ad un libro", *ASL*, 107 (1981). G. Andenna, *Andar per castelli, da Novara tutto intorno* (Torino, 1982).

[61] For discussion of the *libri iurium*, see P. Merati, "Circolazione di modelli documntari fra l'Italia della signorie e l'Europa delle monarchie", in *Signorie italiane e modelli monarchici*, pp. 219-224.

nobility (like the Barbavaria). This shared culture did not mean the absence of internecine conflict in the city, which was driven by a different form of factional conflict. Nevertheless, the ideal of a popular urban culture was a powerful feature of collective urban identity. It is precisely this ideal that Petrarch attempts to invoke in his *arringa*; the concept of a *populus* as "a multitude bound by a consensus of law and tied to the common good" is very much alive in Azario's narrative.

Convertetur populus meus hic

We now transition to consider how Azario reconciles the politics of the *popularis status* with the politics of the signoria. The two were not mutually exclusive. Indeed, it is probable that northwest Italy's tradition of what Rao calls *signori di popolo*, local lords who ruled without *de iure* authority but with broadly popular support, might have helped to predispose Azario to the *signori* of territorial states, including the Visconti, whose early members he tends to praise.[62] This is despite the danger the Visconti posed to the traditional sovereignty of Lombard cities. In a rather colourful phrase, Azario warns that the growing strength of Milan in the 1320s threatened "to absorb the marrow – *medullae* – of Lombardy's cities". [63] Indeed, for Azario, the primary threat of territorial signori was precisely this potential to exploit the city and its *populus*. Hence, he was hypercritical of the avaricious Galeazzo II and the marquis of Montferrat, while still showing sympathy to many of the early Visconti, who were remembered less for their oppressive absolutism.[64] This section will unpack Azario's language to reveal its rhetorical strategies for supporting local government and for challenging the abuses of signorial power. Emphasis will be placed on how this rhetoric undermines the territorial signori's language of regal lordship to instead articulate a system of values more sympathetic to traditional conceptions of popular sovereignty.

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[62] R. Rao, *Signori di Popolo: Signoria cittadina e società comunale nell'Italia nord-occidentale* (Milano, 2011), pp. 39-46.

[63] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 310: *Nec mirum, quia Civitas Mediolani multum erat iam restituta, guerris aliqualiter cessatis, ut inferius dicetur, etiam quia aliqui ex solitis esse Mediolano confoederati, praedicta persuaserunt, et de Civitatibus Mediolani adharentibus, nolentes, quod Mediolanum tam cresceret, quod medullas ipsarum Civitatum absorberet.*

[64] On Azario's treatment of the early Visconti, see S. Dale, "Fourteenth-Century Lombard Chronicles", in S. Dale, A.W. Lewin, and D.J. Osheim (eds.) *Chronicling history: chroniclers and historians in medieval and Renaissance Italy* (University Park, 2007), pp. 177-80.

We begin with Azario's defence of local sovereignty. A couple of value-charged references to Novara's consulate and podesteria are particularly revealing of the notary's attitudes. "During the regime of consuls", Azario claims, "our city always acquired."[65] By contrast, during the podestaria, Azario contends, "the city declined".[66] The terminology requires some deconstruction. The regime of *consules* vaguely refers to the early day's of communal Novara, "when law was first made outside of the Church of Saint Dionysus…later outside Saint Mary", a period that overlaps with Azario's narrative for the beginnings of the city (outlined in the previous section).[67] Azario's podesteria, however, is more difficult to locate in time. It is unlikely that Azario specifically had in mind the late 12th century, when communal records indicate a podestà first appears in Novara, since the event goes unremarked in his history.[68] Azario may have believed that Novara instead began its decline in the mid 13th century, when the city was shaken by a violent civil war between the Tornielli and Brusati clans.[69] He writes extensively about the conflict, and, tellingly, this narrative follows his negative remark about the podesteria. But if this were Azario's meaning, we should interpret the passage above to be a statement about the dangers of urban discord rather than a repudiation of podestà themselves.

Much more probable, Azario did intend to blame podestà as the cause of Novara's misfortunes (the adverb, *semper*, confirms this interpretation), and specifically had in mind the podestà that ruled Novara after 1332, when either the Visconti or marquis of Montferrat controlled the city. Azario only makes a passing reference to a single podestà before 1332; thereafter, however, he discusses the careers of several, most of whom – in Azario's judgement – ruled poorly. Leonardo Visconti (son of Giovanni) is said to have managed Novara so badly (*male*), ineptly (*inepte*), and weakly (*debiliter*) that he was

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[65] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 362. *Durantibus autem Consulibus, semper nostra Civitas acquisivit.*
[66] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 362. *Regnantibus vero Potestaribus semper declinavit.*
[67] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 362. *Regnantibus autem Novariae praedictis Consulibus, ius redditum fuit primo sub una volta Ecclesiae Sancti Dionysii, nuper destructa. Deinde iustitia reddita fuit sub voltis Ecclesiae Paradasii Sanctae Mariae Maioris.*
[68] G. Garone, *I reggitori di Novara: Memorie* (Novara, 1865), p. 75. Cited in J.C. Maire Vigueur (ed.), *I podestà dell'Italia comunale: parte I* (Roma, 2001), p. 9.
[69] F. Dessilani, "Le vicende storiche del Novarese dal comune alla signoria", in M Montanari (ed.), *Una terra tra due fiumi, la provincia di Novara nella storia: L'età medievale* (Novara, 2002), p. 109.

thrown out.[70] Curtio Porro is "stupider than throwing stones" (*stultior proiicientibus lapides*), blamed for managing Novara's defences so incompetently that the city was conquered by the marquis of Montferrat.[71] Another podestà is rumoured to have kept horsemen in the district, which he allegedly used to sack the city.[72] He is replaced by a far more capable administrator, Bartolomeo di San Giorgio Canavese, but too late. Azario bemoans that had he only been podestà earlier, "Galliate and other places in the district of Novara would not have been made possessions by the lord of Milan", underscoring his claims about the incompetence of prior podestà.[73] Bartolomeo is succeeded by Ottino de Marliano, who "outdid the neglect and rapacity of other podestà."[74] A later podestà, Giovanni Pirovano, is associated with egregious taxation. "One hundred thousand florins", Azario informs us, "were exacted from Novara and its district for Lord Galeazzo in the time of the podestà."[75]

It is likely that when Azario disparages the podesteria for presiding over the decline of Novara, he specifically has in mind the records of these men. Since they were each installed by foreign lords as quasi-vicars, it follows that Azario also meant for his criticisms to be interpreted as a statement against foreign lordship.[76] Telling is the language used by Azario to describe the loss of Novara's independence, brought about by a coup led by Giovanni Visconti: "After the many deeds that happened within, the city with its district from that point on declined (*declinavit*)".[77] Azario probably intended to associate Novara's decline under Giovanni with its decline under the podesteria, linking the two though his repetition of *declinavit*.

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[70] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 336: *Sed male, inepte, et debiliter in ipso regimine se gerentem demum indignanter eiecit privatum gratia sua, nec deinceps voluit ipsum audire nominari.*
[71] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 349.
[72] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 365: *Immo Novariae publice dicebatur, quod ipse equos praedantes Novariam habebat in Galliato. Propter haec et alia nefanda remotus fuit a Potestaria...*
[73] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 365: *Et certe si primus Potestas fuisset, Galliatum et alia loca in districtu Novariae possessa per Dominum Mediolani non fecissent, sicut fecerunt, et de quibus locis dicetur inferius.*
[74] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 368: *Et profecto diebus meis iste Podestas superavit ceterorum Potestatum negligentiam et rapacitatem.*
[75] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 369: *Et scio, quod tempore dicti Domini Johannis Pirovani Potestatis exacta fuerunt in Novaria et districtu centum millia Florenorum pro eodem Domino Galeazzio…*
[76] On the podestà's relationship with the signoria, see P. Pedrazzoli, "Novara nello stato Visconteo" in *Statuta civitatis Novariae: gli statuti di Francesco Sforza Commento e traduzione* (Novara, 1993).
[77] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 324: *Et quae Civitas cum districtu abinde citra declinavit post multa gesta in eo.* For background, see F. Negro, "Vescovi signori e monarchia papale nel Trecento", in *Signorie italiane e modelli monarchici*, pp. 198-200.

Further indication of Azario's localism appears in his *Chronicon*'s treatment of Pavia, which was acquired by the Visconti following a four-year war between 1356 and 1359.[78] Azario's narrative frames Pavia's conquest as a tragic lesson about the consequences of internal division:

> If the aforesaid Beccaria had not fought among themselves, and not inflicted destruction, and if they had not held and did not now hold the aforesaid marquis as a friend, and if they had not split from the *populus*, Lord Galeazzo would never have been their master, and he would not have led Pavia into the depths.[79]

Another passage glamorises the city's conflict with the Visconti as a heroic struggle for independence. "The Pavesi preferred to die in their country than be led weakly by others", says their commander, Bussolaro. "And so they waged a *iustum bellum*, moved as they were by the histories and examples of the Romans."[80]

A similar sense of localism appears in Azario's *Opusculum*, in which the notary bemoans the civil wars fought between Guelphs and Ghibellines that so weakened the region that, by the middle of the 14th century, the inhabitants of the Canavese were too weak to defend themselves against marauding bands of English mercenaries.[81] By necessity, they had to pledge allegiance to the marquis of Montferrat and the princes of Savoy for the sake of receiving their protection. "Thus, because of war and vice", Azario explains, "those who were once free and powerful were made poor and submitted to the yoke of perpetual servitude."[82]

Once again, Azario's narrative functions as a morality tale warning about the consequences of internal divisions. The point is underscored by Azario juxtaposing the plight of these unfortunate communities of the Canavese with the success of the men of Corgnate, a place dear to Azario because his uncle had served there as podestà. Amidst

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[78] P. Majocchi, *Pavia città regia: Storia e memoria di una capitale altomedievale* (Roma, 2008), p. 191.
[79] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 373: …si praedicti de Beccaria inter se non discordassent, nec devastassent, nec tenuissent, nec tenerent Marchionem praedictum in amicum, nec cum Populo fecissent divisionem, numquam Dominus Galeazius fuisset ei dominatus, nec ipsam deduxisset in profundis.
[80] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 375:... [Bussolaro] *incitabat Papienses ad pugnandum, inculcans, quod Papienses malebant mori in patria sua, quam ad alienas debiliter deduci; quodve favebant iustum bellum, ad quod movebantur historiis et exemplis Romanorum.*
[81] On the Canavese, see A. Barbero, "La rivolta come strumento politico delle comunitá rurali", in A. Gamberini and G. Petralia (eds*.), Linguaggi politici nell"Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2007). C. Rotelli, *Una campagna medievale. Storia agrariana del Piemonte fra il 1250 e il 1450* (Torino, 1973), pp. 11-13. P. Venesia, *Il Tuchinaggio in Canavese* (Ivrea, 1979).
[82] Azario, *Opusculum*, p. 197. *Unde propter guerram et morbum subsecutum, ubi liberi et potentes erant, nunc pauperes effecti sunt et submissi iugo perpetue servitutis.*

the disintegration of the region, Corgnate had remained undivided by faction. Azario celebrates their success:

> In the Canavese the men of Corgnate fared better. They protected their land from the threats of the aforesaid wicked men, and on account of the goodness of their lords concerning inheritance owed to them upon the absence of a male heir, nothing new was introduced to their ancient pacts. To the contrary the said land shone with palaces and towers, and the *burgus*'s counts excelled all others in riches as well as in merit, since the men were lawful and of one party and treated their friends well. May Christ conserve them in a good and pacific state.[83]

The passage, and – indeed – the *Opusculum* as a whole, constitutes one of the clearest expressions of Azario's political attitudes. It explicitly denounces foreign lordship, termed "the yoke of perpetual servitude". Equally, it champions local government, albeit on the condition that it ruled well and without divisions.

We might next inquire as to what Azario's support for independence reflects about his constitutional preferences. How precisely should the locality be ruled? Unfortunately, absent clarification from Azario, it is difficult to arrive at a definitive conclusion. Although we might expect Azario to use his histories to sanction regimes run by *populares*, if anything, they tend to be dismissive of their political aptitude. It is an attitude that appears in Azario's narrative for the occupation of Novara by the marquis of Montferrat, which is described in terms that disparage the *populares* for their acceptance of the new regime.

> He [the marquis of Montferrat] began to attend to the *popularis status*, saying that just as the city of Pavia was recently ruled without tyrants, he wanted in the same way to rule Novara. And having given this order, that he so had decreed, the simple Novaresi, not caring about the future, were so animated in spirit that they believed him a God...[84]

The reader might be inclined to excuse the innocence of the *populares*. But Azario emphasises that the attitude of *populares* was dangerously short-sighted.

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[83] Azario, *Opusculum*, p. 197: *In quo Canepicio melius sucessit hominibus de Corgnate, qui terram suam a minibus predictorum nefandorum servaverunt et propter bonitatem suorum Dominorum de sucessionibus perveniendis in eorum dominos, herede masculo deficiente, secundum eorum pacta antiqua nihil estitit innovatum, imo dicta terra palatiis, et turribus Burgum suum refulgent, et predicti burgienses Comites contrarios in diviciis antecellunt, et merito, quia legales homines et unius partis sunt et amicos recipiuent valde bene. Quos Christus in bono et pacifico statu conservet cum Dominis ipsis et suis de Valperga in secula seculorum...*

[84] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 364: *... coepit de Populari statu procurare, dicens, quod sicuti Papiensis Civitas nuper regebatur sine Tyrannis, ipse volebat eidem modo Novariam regi. Et dato ordine suo, et decreverat, simplices Novarienses non curantes de futuris ita animati fuerunt, quod credebant ipsum Deum.*

Therefore while the aforementioned marquis crushed the nobles of Novara and its district, impoverishing them and committing grave deeds, most of the *pars Civium* led choruses through the streets and elsewhere, not concerning themselves with the sorrows that would follow.[85]

This prejudice against popular politics is not unusual. Even staunch supporters of popular sovereignty, including Aquinas, Peter of Auvergne, and Nicolas de Vaudèmont, warned against the irrational politics of the undisciplined masses, what Peter and Nicholas term the "bestial multitude".[86] Indeed, in Novara itself antipathy toward popular politics was especially pronounced, such that from the middle of the 14th century the city had banned artisans from its council (oddly, Azario is silent on this).[87] Still, the purpose of Azario's criticisms may have been less to dismiss the political potential of the *populares* than to encourage them to more actively oppose lords that did not have their and the community's long-term interests at heart. This hortatory function is more obviously served by a comparison Azario makes between the *populares* of Pavia and Novara, both of whom experienced the lordship of the marquis of Montferrat. As in Novara, the marquis had attempted to impose heavy taxes in Pavia, but had less success in sustaining them. Azario explains:

Nevertheless, [the marquis] was not able to extort money arbitrarily there [in Pavia] as he did in Novara, where he discovered that the men were weak, effeminate, and womanly. In Pavia, they were strong.[88]

Pavia and its *populares* are thus set up as a model for the *populares* of Novara. Their lords, however, are less exemplary. On one hand, the Beccaria are commended for restraining the abuses of the marquis, with Azario noting that "the Beccaria resisted [the marquis], not wanting that their Pavia be plundered".[89] Their opposition, however, is not entirely altruistic. "Florello [Beccaria] had well desired to plunder for himself", Azario

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[85] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 365: *Praefato igitur Marchione Nobiles Novariae et districtus in hunc modum conculcante, et gravis patrante, ac eosdem depauperante, plurima pars Civium per plateas et alibi ducebat choreas, non advertens de doloribus successivis.*

[86] V. Syros, "The Sovereignty of the Multitude in the Works of Marsilius of Padua, Peter of Auvergne, and Some Other Aristotelian Commentators", in G. Moreno-Riaño (ed.), *The World of Marsilius of Padua* (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 231-5.

[87] For the role of guilds in Duecento Novara, see F. Cognasso, "Novara nella sua storia", in *Novara e il suo territorio* (Novara, 1952), pp. 205, 230, 277-279. Quoted in E. Artifoni, "Corporazioni e società di <<Popolo>>: un problema della politica comunale nel secolo XIII", *Quaderni Storici* 74/2 (August, 1990), p. 394. See also P. Pedrazzoli, "Novara nello stato Visconteo".

[88] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 375: *Tamen ibi non poterat pro libito pecuniam extorquere, sicuti extorquebat in Novara, ubi homines eviratos, foemineos, et muliebres invenerat, sed in Papia viros fortes.*

[89] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 375: *Et praesertim quia hi de Beccaria resistebant, nolentes , quod suam Papiam praedaretur.*

explains, "but did not like to enable other plunderers."[90] For Azario, local signori are often preferable masters only by comparison.

We might expect that Azario would say more about the political role of the *populares* and the *signori di popolo*, but he is strangely reticent. Even the Tornielli, Novara's own *signori di popoli* prior to Giovanni's coup, receive only brief, neutral coverage (despite the fact that the Tornielli were Azario's in-laws). Perhaps the reason for this is because, ultimately, Azario was more interested in the territorial signori, the primary political actors of his time. The remainder of this section will focus on the ways in which Azario qualifies their lordship, and what this reveals about Azario's understanding of the prerogatives and limits of signorial power.

Of Azario's rhetoric in favour or against particular lords, much can be reduced to concerns about money.[91] The notary harangues Giovanni d'Oleggio and his officials for pillaging the resources of the state. He blames the "destruction" of Franceschino Gambacorta and his family (signori in Pisa and Lucca) on their decision to "collect florins from the commune of Pisa."[92] The theme is even more pronounced in Azario's treatment of the marquis of Montferrat, who is explicitly likened to Nero, the archetype of tyrants, because he imposed "uncustomary exactions".[93] By far the worst offender is Iacopo Bussolaro, the previously mentioned Augustinian preacher who became *de facto* lord of Pavia during its war with the Visconti. Notwithstanding Azario's support for the war, he upbraids Bussolaro for raising money for the military effort by convincing Pavesi to renounce their coin, and when that was given away, to renounce their gold, silver, gems, diamonds, precious stones, and other luxury items. Azario laments that, rather than support the war effort, this wealth was then given to the marquis of Montferrat, Bussolaro's political master.[94]

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[90] Azario, Chronicon, p. 377: *...Dominus Florellus, qui bene pro se rapere curaverat, sed raptoribus numquam voluerat consentire.*

[91] For background on the finances of territorial states, see I. Lazzarini, *L'Italia degli Stati territoriali* (Roma-Barti, 2003), pp. 86-91.

[92] Azario, *Chronicon*, pp. 342-3: *[Franceschino] qui dominium Civitatis Pisanae et Lucanae feliciter gubernabat, et maximum cumulum Florenorum ipsi Communi Pisarum coacervaverat. Ex quo devenit destructio sua et suae parentelae.*

[93] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 364: *Et sic firmato pede habuit de Novariensibus extirpandis procurare. Entratis ordinariis alias non consuetas adiecit: deinde tales ponendo, coepit apud nonnullos regnare sicut Nero. Libertates Communis Novariae vendidit, oppignoravit sive voluntarie, sive invitus.*

[94] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 377.

Themes of abusive lordship also appear in Azario's discussion of the Visconti, whose more recent members become the notary's targets. Much of his opposition toward the regime is related to the price of its expansionism. Azario remarks that the desire to take Bologna, especially, had cost the signoria in men and treasure. He bemoans:

> But how unhappy was the day of the purchase of Bologna for the other cities of Lombardy! In fact it could be said from that day there were scandals, errors, intolerable expenses, lasting up to the present, that [now] lacerate Lombardy. If only Bologna had never been.[95]

The manner in which Azario criticizes specific Visconti generally concerns financial malpractice. Galeazzo II, lord of western Lombardy at the time of the *Chronicon*'s composition, is a favourite target. He is lambasted for no small variety of failures, including for ignoring petitions, insufficiently compensating his mercenaries, waging infinite wars, and damning Novara, Vercelli, and other cities to "troubled vicissitudes".[96] But particularly egregious were Galeazzo's extortionate taxes, each described in hyperbolic terms. The money raised to pay Galeazzo's mercenaries "crucifies his lay and clerical subjects with infinite expenses".[97] The expense of a wedding "truly impoverished his cities, so that for the sake of enriching his treasury, Galeazzo burdened the economies of Milan and its contado more than was accustomed."[98] Other extravagant expenses, like the creation of a *studium* in Pavia or the dispatch of an embassy to France *laceravit et vituperavit* Novara and its district (somehow, though, the contado town of Borgomanero managed to escape the worst of it).[99] At least, Azario observes, a future regime might be less oppressive, as Novara had nothing left to give. Appropriately, Azario follows this observation with a popular adage (originally from Juvenal): "The poor traveller will sing in the presence of a robber".[100]

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[95] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 326: *Oh quam fuit infelix illa dies emtionis Bononiae aliis Civitatibus Lombardiae: Nam potest dici, quod tunc orta sunt scandala, errores, impensae intolerabiles, et quae usque ad praesentem diem viguerunt, Lombardiam lacerando. Et utinam Bononia non fuisset.*

[96] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 369. On local attitudes toward taxation, see P. Mainoni, *Economia e politica nella Lombardia medievale: Da Bergamo a Milano fra XIII e XV secolo* (Cavallermaggiore 1994), pp. 129-145.

[97] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 381: *Nam Dominus Mediolani propter infinitas expensas, quas propterea patitur, Laicos et Clericos subditos cruciat expensis infinitis.*

[98] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 403: *Et pro excipiendo nurum suam, adeo ceteras suas Civitates depauperavit pecunia, ut pro ditando aerario plus gravet Florenis quam consuetum est, etiam Mediolanum et Comitatum.*

[99] On Galeazzo's expenses, see Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 403. On the taxation of Novara and its district, see Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 415-16.

[100] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 368-9: *Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator*

How, then, should a lord act? The text offers a few model lords, but their characteristics are generally the stuff of bland tropes. Matteo Visconti "exceeds his successors in goodness, virtue, wisdom, and industry".[101] Luchino Visconti loves peace, justice, and equality, and his dominion is secure enough for it to be travelled day or night.[102]

More informative is Azario's take on King Robert, who receives lengthy praise, despite his leadership of the rival Guelph party.

> King Robert, his [King Charles's] son, was crowned with kingdoms and other realms, and seeing that Italy lacked empire and a master, took care of all Italy and especially Lombardy (with the favour of the party of the church). But it should not be surprising that he acquired some cities in Lombardy, since he did not allow that the citizens support the expenses of wars, but rather Robert paid for them from his Sicilian treasury and gave as much money [*provisiones*] to the subject-citizens in the cities he acquired as to the mercenaries making war against the Ghibellines.[103]

The emphasis on fiscal munificence is the salient feature of the passage, contrasting with the avarice of Galeazzo II and the marquis of Montferrat. A good lord did not impoverish his subjects; a great lord enriched them. Equally illuminative is Azario's impressions of Galeazzo's brother, Bernabò, who ruled in the east of Lombardy. The most revealing comments about his lordship emerge from a novelistic anecdote about a *rusticus* toiling in the woods near Lodi, whose meagre wealth is frequently plundered by his lord's *castellanus*. The peasant's luck changes when he meets a lost nobleman, who promises to remunerate the peasant if he should guide him out of the forest. The peasant agrees, despite that he is at first wary, having been too often deceived by nobility before. While journeying with the nobleman, the peasant shares his opinion about Galeazzo, whom he blames for having done nothing to curb the abuses of the region's *castellani*. When the peasant is asked for his views on Galeazzo's brother, Bernabò, he replies:

> Of him better is said. Though he is a wild beast, he keeps the peace. If he were not this way, I and the other poor would not dare to go into the depths of the woods for work. Indeed Bernabò keeps

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[101] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 301: *...alios successores de Vicecomitibus excessit bonitate, virtutibus, sacacitate, et industria.*

[102] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 317.

[103] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 303: ...Rex Robertus, eius filius, de regnis ipsis et aliis coronatus fuit. Et videns Italiam Imperio carere et magistro, curam adhibuit de universa Italia et precipue Lombardiaa (favente etiam Ecclesia romana), possidenda. Nec mirum si aliquas civitates in Lombardia acquirebat, quoniam non patiebatur, quod Cives supportarent expensas guerrarum, sed ipsis et maximas provisiones de aerario suo Siciliae persolvebat tam Civibus subjectis in Civitatibus acquisitis, quam stipendiariis facientibus guerram eorum contra quosque Gibellinos.

good justice, and what he promises, he delivers completely. The other brother does the contrary.[104]

This favourable impression is soon born out. Upon exiting the woods, the noble reveals himself to be Bernabò, and not only awards the peasant his promised money, but feeds him, shelters him, and restores his *campicili*, previously plundered by the *castellanus*. [105]

The story is surely fantasy, seemingly compiled from the tropes of fairy tales. Yet it is significant for the mentality it reflects. Its language is reminiscent of the rhetoric Azario uses to discuss Novara's early history, invoking its images of predatory nobles and oppressed peasants. But while Azario had imagined Novara and its *popularis status* as a bulwark against this culture of violence, here it is a lord who serves that function. In addition to this is an emphasis on Bernabò's justice and his personal honour. These are attributes that contrast with Galeazzo's perceived qualities, as well as those of other lords, whom the peasant had earlier maligned for their deception, even worrying that the lost nobleman, "like other officials of my Devil lord", would refuse payment upon exiting the woods, only to return later to plunder his property.[106] Bernabò, however, defies the stereotype. This portrayal of a good *signore di popolo* – one bound by his agreements, keen to conserve peace, and willing to correct injustices, particularly as perpetrated by nobles – is Azario's vision of ideal lordship, even if noticeably couched in the language and values of the *popularis status*.

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The way Azario champions the popular state and its associated values makes the historian one of the more conservative voices of Lombard historiography. It is a mindset that is otherwise quite singular in the region (as geographically defined by Azario), though it lends itself to comparisons with the histories of Florence's Villani and Reggio's Pietro Gazato. The Villani, though concerning themselves more with questions of *libertas*, nevertheless exhibit Azario's same mixture of pessimism and practicality. They, too, were

[104] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 394: *Dicitur de illo melius, quamvis sit ferus, quia pace ille conservat. Et nisi sic esset, ego et alii pauperes pro laborando ausi non essemus devia nemorum intrare. Etiam conservat bonam iustitiam, et quae promittit, totaliter attendit. At iste aliter contrarium facit.*
[105] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 396.
[106] Azario, *Chronicon*, p. 394.

concerned about the decline of popular institutions and the abuses of tyrants.[107] Pietro Gazato, on other hand, shares both Azario's suspicion of the Visconti and his populist hostility toward the nobility (the local Fogliani are a favourite target). His conclusions are also the same: that the *civitas* is strongest when local actors – and not the Milanese signoria – suppress internal divisions.[108]

Back in Novara, an appreciation for Azario's populist outlook helps place into context Petrarch's address to the Novaresi. He had tried to win the loyalty of the Novaresi not through any claims of absolutism, but by reminding the Novaresi of the good government led by Galeazzo II's predecessors and by declaiming the specific affection that Galeazzo II had for the Novaresi:

> And today the lord chose you, as you are to him a *populus peculiaris*. I pray that God illuminates his dominion and that his dominion illuminates you; and that God allows that Galeazzo govern with justice and counsel and that you submit with faith and obedience, so that you not desire another state or lord and that Galeazzo not love another *populus* more.[109]

The rhetoric is much more sensitive to the political attitudes of the Novaresi, making a case for the signori based on the virtues of the regime and in deference to the people's right to choose their lord ("I pray that...you not desire another state or lord", Petrarch says). At least for Azario, this exhortation failed. The legacy of the last few decades weighed too heavily on the notary to give blind credence to claims of the signoria's benevolence, undermined by financial mismanagement, insecurity, and the hardships of decades of war. His texts make clear that he preferred that Novara remain independent, or if it had to give itself to a lord, that it be a regime subservient to the popular will. Whether this message resonated with the text's readership is another question. Surviving today in but a single manuscript, the *Chronicon* seems to have been ignored by most later 14th century writers. In the Quattrocento, however, it found a new life, and was used by a

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[107] On Villani, see F. Ragone, *Giovanni Villani e i suoi continuatori. La scrittura delle cronache a Firenze del Trecento* (Roma, 1998), pp. 193-5. L. Green, "Historical Interpretation in Fourteenth-Century Florentine Chronicles", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 28/2 (1967), pp. 168-171. E. Artifoni, "La consapevolezza di un nuovo aspetto politico-sociale nella cronistica italiana d'età avignonese: Alcuni esempi fiorentini", in *Aspetti culturali della società italiana nel period del papato avignonese* (*Convegni del centro di studi sulla spiritualita medievale*, 19, 1981).

[108] A. Gamberini, *Oltre le città: Assetti territoriali e culture aristocratiche nella Lombardia del tardo medioevo* (Roma, 2009), p. 103.

[109] Hortis, *Scritti inediti*, pp. 357-8: *Et Dominus elegit te hodie, ut sis ei populus peculiaris…Deum oro, ut dominum, et vos illuminet; et sibi ea iustitia ac consilio praeesse, vobis ea fide atque obsequio subesse tribuat, ne aut vobis alium statum seu dominum optare, aut sibi alium populum plus amare conveniat.*

handful of historians, including Fabrizio Mariliani (*Valison*), Gioffredo Della Chiesa (*Cronaca di Saluzzo*), Galeotto del Carretto (*Cronica del Monferrato*), Benvenuto San Giorgio (*Historia Montiferrati*) and Bescapè (*De Ecclesia Noveriensi libri duo*).[110] Notably, the *Chronicon* was also absorbed into Milan's civic annals.[111] How the compiler would have accorded the text's strong localism with the annals' devotion to the Milanese signoria is a topic worthy for another study.

[110] Patrone, "Azario, Pietro".
[111] L.A. Ferrai, "Gli <<Annales Mediolanenses>> e i cronisti lombardi dei secolo XIV", *ASL*, 17 (1890), pp. 286-7.

Chapter 4: The Ghibelline History of Giovanni Musso

It is a peculiar feature of the 1401 testament of Gian Galeazzo Visconti that it required that Giovanni Maria, "as his first-born, should succeed to the duchy of Milan and hold dominion [...] under condition that he and his successors are princes and defenders of the Ghibelline faction."[1] It was only in 1382 that Gian Galeazzo had decreed that anyone who invoked the name Guelph or Ghibelline would have his tongue removed, a measure modelled after a law issued by Bernabò Visconti in 1366.[2] The incongruity between the language of Gian Galeazzo's testament and the signoria's earlier edicts is usually resolved by distinguishing between the local and supra-local languages of the regime. Within the territorial state, the Visconti assumed the mantle of the impartial arbiter acting *super partes*. Elsewhere, they exploited the language of Ghibellinism to affiliate themselves with the empire and with Italy's traditionally Ghibelline states, a useful device for building unity coalitions during periods of war.[3] Gian Galeazzo's testament, produced during the regime's conflict with Guelph Florence, would have served to broadcast the regime's solidarity with Ghibelline actors. With similar purpose, Filippo Maria Visconti appealed to Ghibellinism in the 1420s and 1430s to attract like-minded allies in his war with Florence and Venice.[4]

We might question, however, whether local actors could so easily distinguish between the regime's languages. The differences between centre and periphery were blurred when the regime, as it often did, employed party idioms to communicate with local actors, or when local actors invoked their traditional party allegiances to express

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[1] B. Corio, *Storia di Milano* (ed. A. Morisi Guerra), 2 (Torino, 1978), p. 968: *come primogenito suo, succedesse in el ducato de Milano e tenesse il dominio [...], sotto condicione che lui e successori suoi fussino principe e difensori de gibellina factione.*

[2] F. Somaini, "Il binomio imperfetto: alcune osservazioni su guelfi e ghibellini a Milano in età visconteo-sforzesca", in M. Gentile (ed.) *Guelfi e ghibellini nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2005), pp. 144-45. *Annales Mediolanenses ab anno MCCXXX usque ad annum MCCCCII*, in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 16 (Milano, 1730), p. 736. E. Lattes (ed.) *Repertorio diplomatico visconteo*, 2 (Milano, 1911), n. 2984 (21 September 1382), p. 354.

[3] Somaini, "Il binomio imperfetto", pp. 147-150.

[4] M. Gentile, "<<Postquam malignitates temporum hec nobis dedere nomina...>>. Fazioni, idiomi politici e pratiche di governo nella tarda età viscontea", in *Guelfi e ghibellni*, pp. 258-9.

solidarity or dissent with the signoria.[5] After all, within the dualistic structure of party politics, there was no ignoring the past relationship the Visconti had with the Ghibellines. The family had served as the party's champions in the early 14th century, leading a successful alliance of Ghibelline signori to defeat John XXII's Guelph crusade.[6] It would not have helped that, even within the borders of the territorial state, the signoria could thereafter appear all too eager to reprise this leadership. In Belluno, Gian Galeazzo exiled Guelphs and privileged relations with Ghibelline families.[7] In the Martesana, both Gian Galeazzo and Filippo Maria granted tax exemptions to the *nobiles, communitates, et homines partis gibelline*.[8] In Bergamo, Filippo Maria had exiled the Guelphs in 1427.[9] Given this context, it should be no surprise that the regime's professed neutrality did little to assuage the Parmigiano nobleman Pietro Rossi, who in the early 15th century warned that it was the will of the duke of Milan to act "with all the Ghibellines of Piacenza and Parma to dismember the Guelph party."[10]

All this is to suggest that the modern paradigm positing a strict separation between local and supralocal politics is rather misleading. The Visconti could as easily disavow parties as champion (or at least appear to champion) the Ghibelline cause. The inconsistency was an inevitable consequence of a political system that was itself fluid and contingent, operating in a way that Cengarle has aptly observed to be "a succession of constitutional experiments that are layered one on top of another and/or one next to the other in constant creativity, shaped by the evolution of concrete situations and by the reactions that they determine."[11]

This chapter is interested in the interplay between the regime's Ghibelline identity and the identities of the locality. To what extent did the politics of the regime influence

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[5] See M. Gentile, "Factions and Parties: Problems and Perspectives", in A. Gamberini and I. Lazzarini (eds.) *The Italian Renaissance State* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 313-20.
[6] Gentile, "Factions and Parties", p. 314.
[7] J. Law, "Guelfs and Ghibellines in Belluno c. 1400", in *Guelfi e ghibellni*, pp. 611, 613-614; on other occasions, however, Gian Galeazzo governed Belluno impartially, see pp. 614-617.
[8] M. Gentile, *Terra e poteri: Parma e il Parmense nel ducato visconteo all'inizio del Quattrocento* (Milano, 2001), p. 154.
[9] Gentile, "Postquam malignitates temporum", p. 265.
[10] M. Gentile, *Terra e poteri*, p. 152: *cum tuti le gebelini de Piaxentina e de Parmexana [...] de desfare la parte guelfa.*
[11] F. Cengarle, "Tra maiestas Imperii e maiestas Domini", in P. Grillo (ed.) *Signorie italiane e modelli monarchici: Secoli XIII-XIV* (Roma, 2013), p. 262: *una succesione di esperimenti costituzionali, che sedimentano uno sull'altro e/o uno accanto all'altro in una costante creatività plasmata dall'evolversi delle situazioni concrete e dalle reazioni che esse determinano.*

local categories of factional or party membership? To what degree did the conflicts of the signoria, often with nominally Guelph actors, play a role in the formation of a territorial identity premised on a party ideology? What were the various discourses, central and local, in which party identity was expressed? The activity of political parties has been a fixture of Italian scholarship for the last 30 years, mainly focused on cartulary evidence and diplomatics, in order to clarify how parties facilitated territorial administration, participation in government, and regional communication, particularly during moments in which the central structures of *signorie* were weak.[12] The evidence of historiography, however, has been largely ignored, at the cost of overlooking how the political language of a party could shape social memories, uniting otherwise disparate political groups with a shared political ideology and a history of a common struggle. One reason for the neglect is that histories could often be dismissive of parties, an attitude typified by Azario's *Chronicon de Gestis Principium Vicecomitum*, which compares them to *daemones*.[13]

Another reason is a modern aversion to understanding parties as ideological vessels, with academics preferring a paradigm that interprets parties as purely contingent political networks. According to this model, when the idioms of Guelph and Ghibelline are invoked after the mid Trecento, it is because the terminology is convenient, simple, and evocatively forceful. Any precise political or ideological connotation is illusionary.[14] In fact, this conclusion is not a modern one. Bartolo da Sassoferrato contends in his *Tractatus de guelfis et gebellinis* (1355) that, by the middle of the Trecento, parties were not ideological signifiers but related "only to those faction which exist in a city or in a province."[15] Indeed, notwithstanding the rich symbolism, traditions, and rituals that held parties together, there is no question that in practice they often operated as malleable networks that served to coordinate the actions of clans, factions, and communities to achieve specific and contingent political aims.[16] Especially in Milan, it can be said that the names definitively lost the ideological meaning they acquired in the Po Valley at the

[12] For bibliography on parties, see introduction of this thesis, pp. 19-21, especially footnote 33.
[13] P. Azario, *Chronicon de Gestis Principium Vicecomitum*, in L.A. Muratori (ed.), *RIS*, 16 (Milano, 1730), p. 299.
[14] Somaini, "Il binomio imperfetto", pp. 186-92.
[15] Tabacco, *Struggle for Power*, p. 257.
[16] For this conceptualization of party association, see J. Heers, *Parties and Political Life in the Medieval West* (Holland, 1977).

beginning of the 14th century, when Ghibellinism signalled support for the empire and the Visconti; Guelphism, for the Angevins and the papacy.[17] But we should be wary of concluding that party idioms were at all times neutered of their ideological register. Well into the Quattrocento the term Ghibelline could invoke fidelity toward the empire, both on a local and supra-local level. So it is that in 1430 an official of the signoria could describe local discord in terms that recalled the imperial identity of his party, warning Filippo Maria that, should nothing be done to reverse the tide of Guelph successes, "there will be no obstacle and the enemies of the Roman empire will subjugate all Italy." [18]

This chapter will suggest that there was a language of *Ghibellinism*, deriving from the usage of the term at the beginning of the 14th century, based on an imperial ideology and a rejection of papal hierocracy. It is a language formed from the attempts by Henry VII and then Louis of Bavaria to restore the empire to Italy, aimed against the efforts by the papacy to assume temporal authority over the empire. Its vocabulary, value structure, and rhetorical content drew from the polemics of the radical Franciscans, Dante's *Monarchia*, and Marsilius of Padua's *Defensor Pacis*, among other sources.[19] Throughout the Trecento, this language continued to bear on categories of group identity within the territorial state, structuring the ways that communities and political associations remembered the past. It is a language that, though often connected to the Ghibelline label (as is the case with Gian Galeazzo's testament), could also transcend it, providing even nominal Guelphs with an ideology and history sympathetic to the politics of the empire. This is the significance of Giovanni Musso's *Chronicon Placentinum*.[20] Written between 1386 and 1402, Musso's history of Piacenza is an example of what might be termed a

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[17] The terms originated in Florence in the 1240s, but were not widely used in Lombardy until the 1320s, when a crusade was called by John XXII to reorganize the region under Guelph *signorie*. This chapter will take care not to anachronistically apply these labels to the political parties of 13th-century Lombardy. On origins of the terminology, see G. Dallari, "Guelfi e ghibellini. Sguardo sull'origine e la diffusione dei due nomi in Italia e sul loro significato politico", *Rendiconti dell'Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere, Classe di Scienze Morali*, 70 (1937). R.M. Dessì, "I nomi di guelfi e ghibellini da Carlo I d'Angiò a Petrarca", in *Guelfi e ghibellini*, pp. 11-47. S. Raveggi, *L'Italia dei guelfi e dei ghibellini* (Milano, 2009).

[18] L. Osio (ed.), *Documenti diplomatici tratti dagli archivi milanesi*, 2 (Milano, 1864-1872), pp. 429-30. Cited in Gentile, "Postquam malignitates temporum", p. 259: *nullum erit obstaculum et emili Romani Imperii totam subjugabunt Italiam*. Cf. S. Ferente, *Gli ultimi Guelfi* (Rome, 2013).

[19] This will discussed in further detail below, pp. 200-202.

[20] G. Musso, "Chronicon Placentinum", in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 16 (Milano, 1730). N.B.: The edited edition omits the beginning of the chronicle, which accounts for the six ages of the world, to begin in the year 202 A.D. Where necessary, this thesis will cite Modena: Biblioteca Estense, Estense lat. 45, *Johannis de Mussis Chronicon Placentinum.*

Ghibelline history, a chronicle whose narrative communicated the achievements and ideology of the *pars Imperatoris*, which it links to the identity of Piacenza and its leading clans. The text and its author will be the subject of this chapter.

Musso was a well-to-do agent of the local administration of Piacenza and also the Visconti court. He is first referenced in a notarial act of 1362, in which he is identified as a Piacentine excise officer in the contado region of Nure and Trebbia. In 1371 we find him operating in Cusago on behalf of Bernabò Visconti, tasked with representing the interests of the *signore* in front of the bishop of Alba. By 1380, he was a member of Piacenza's General Council, in which capacity he oversaw the revision of urban statutes relating to commodity duties. [21] Several pieces of circumstantial evidence associate Musso with Gian Galeazzo's court at Pavia. We know that he was operating in the city as early as 1373. His history evinces detailed knowledge of a funeral procession that took place that year, which turned tragic when a bridge collapsed under the weight of hundreds of mourners on procession.[22] The *Chronicon* also reproduces one of Gian Galeazzo's letters to Francesco Carrara, *signore* of Padua, which we can speculate Musso obtained at the Pavese court.[23] We can also assume that it was as Gian Galeazzo's representative that Musso delivered a citation in 1400 to the abbot of San Sisto, requesting his appearance in front of a Roman tribunal (the details of the citation are unclear, but probably challenged the legality of the abbot's election). It is a testament to Musso's successful career and his business acumen (he made profitable investments in the countryside to the south and east of Piacenza) that, by the end of the Trecento, he is ascribed the title of *dominus* in notarial acts, notwithstanding that he was born to a non-noble family.[24]

Musso's *Chronicon* defies simple categorization. It is nominally a history of Piacenza up to 1402, the death of Gian Galeazzo. The bulk of the text, covering events from the creation of the world to 1375, follows an annalistic format, focusing on events in Piacenza and the Po Valley. The *Chronicon* draws from several Lombard and local

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[21] P. Castignoli, *Liber daciorum et officiorum Communis Placentie (Anno MCCCLXXX), L'appalto delle gabelle e degli uffici in un comune cittadino del dominio visconteo* (Roma, 1975), p. 57.
[22] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 513.
[23] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 550.
[24] The above biography derives from P. Castignoli, "Il pensiero politico del cronista Giovanni Musso e la sua invettiva contro il potere temporale della chiesa all'epoca del grande scisma d'occidente", *BSP*, 90 (1995), pp. 169-174. See also G. Milani, "Musso, Giovanni", in *DBI*, 77 (Roma, 2012).

histories, including Paul the Deacon's *Historia*, Riccobaldo's *Liber de originibus civitatum*, the anonymous *Annales Placentini Gibellini*, and Pietro da Ripalta's *Chronica Placentina* (on these last two, more later).[25] After 1375, the text abandons its chronological format for a thematic framework, beginning with a treatment of the Visconti and papacy's relationship from 1322 to 1337, a discussion which finishes with a denunciation of the church's intrusion into temporal affairs and an apology for Visconti lordship.[26] The text then cites the (temporary) peace announced between the Visconti and Gregory XI in 1376, at which point it transitions into an even lengthier invective against the wealth and temporal authority of the church. [27] The text subsequently returns to a historical narrative by focussing on events in Europe and Italy up to 1386. It then backtracks to 1379, whence it focuses on the history of the Milanese territorial state up to 1385. Hereafter, the *Chronicon* haphazardly jumps forward and backward in time (but never further back than 1379), treating some European but mainly Italian events, with a focus on the conquests of Gian Galeazzo up to 1402. Considering that the text stays relatively organized until 1386, Castignoli supposes that Musso began composition of his history shortly thereafter, with the bulk of the text composed between 1388 and 1390.[28]

The text survives in two copies, both deriving from Piacenza.[29] (In the 18th century, the city's government prohibited the publication of local manuscripts, so Muratori mendaciously claimed to have found his source material – the 16th-century ms. Estense lat. 45 – in Modena.)[30] The Muratori edition revises the order of the original chronicle, shifting to the appendix several excursus – including lists of the city's rectors and bishops and lists of privileges granted to the city and aristocracy – that seemingly disrupted the text's chronological framework. Muratori's organizational methodology is discussed by Castignoli, but need not concern us here, as this chapter will be primarily

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[25] A. Vasina, "Da Ripalta, Pietro", in B. Andreolli, D. Gatti, R. Greci, *et alii* (eds.) *Repertorio della chronachistica emiliano-romagnola* (Roma, 1991), p. 283.
[26] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 521-4.
[27] For the invective *Contra pastores*, see Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 527-537.
[28] For the dating and organization of Musso's chronicle, see P. Castignoli, "Il pensiero politico", pp. 176-8.
[29] *Comunale 43* (today found in Piacenza's Biblioteca Comunale Passerini-Landi) and *Estense lat. 45* (today found in Modena's Biblioteca Estense).
[30] To a minimal degree, Muratori relied on a third manuscript, owned by the Milanese count Antonio Simonetta, which is today lost. See Castignoli, "Il pensiero politico", pp. 161-2. On the acquisition of ms. Estense lat. 45, see L.A. Muratori, "Carteggio con Alessandro Chiappini", in P. Castignoli (ed.) *Edizione nazionale del carteggio di L.A. Muratori*, 14 (Firenze, 1975), pp. 16-19.

focused on the text's narratives of specific events.[31] It is necessary, however, to point out that at least one text appended to the end of the Muratori edition was not authored by Musso. This is the excursus titled *De antiquitatibus, nobilitatibus, dignitatibus, laudibus, et honoribus Civium Placentiae, et de eorum gestis: omnia sub compendio*, which is in fact the work of the Franciscan friar Oberto Morgomo, who is ascribed as its author by the 15/16th-century manuscript *Pallastrelli 6*.[32] This short text will be discussed in more detail below. Finally, we emphasise that Musso did not faithfully reproduce the texts of his sources. Although this has been recognized by Castignoli, the degree to which Musso alters his source material has been understated, greatly exceeding the few alterations that Castignoli has listed. [33] A comparison between Musso's text and his sources will inform our deconstruction of his political programme. With the exception of a brief article by Castignoli on Musso's anticlericalism (cited above), this chapter constitutes the first study of the ideological content of Musso's history.

The *Chronicon* and its Predecessors

We turn now to a more detailed discussion of the *Chronicon* and its sources. Piacenza has a rich historiographical inheritance, fuelled by the rapidly changing configurations of political association that vied for governance of the city, with history-writing an extension of this competition for power.[34] The usual axes of conflict – in particular divisions between clans and between the *milites* and *populus* – were entangled within a regional conflict that saw Piacenza oscillating between the orbits of Milan and Cremona, and within an interregional conflict that pitted supporters of the church against supporters of the empire.[35] The historiography of Piacenza navigates this web of overlapping

[31] Castignoli, "Il Pensiero politico", pp. 161-168.
[32] P.C. Mesini O.M., "Ludovico Antonio Muratori e le cronache piacentine", *Archivio storico per le Province parmensi*, 3/1 (1936). Cited in Castignoli, "Il pensiero politico", p. 167.
[33] Castignoli, "Il pensiero politico", p. 178.
[34] For an overview of the city's historiography, see D. Gatti and A. Vasina, "Piacenza", in *Repertorio della cronachistica emiliano-romagnola*, pp. 267-288; P. Castignoli, "La storiografia e le fonti", in *Storia di Piacenza: Dal vescovo conte alla signoria (996-1313)*, 2 (Piacenza, 1984); S. Ditchfield, "La letteratura storiografica da Pietro da Ripalta ad Umberto Locati", in *Storia di Piacenza: Dalla signoria viscontea al principato farnesiano (1313-1545)*, 3/1 (Piacenza, 1997).
[35] J. Koenig, *Il 'popolo' dell'Italia del nord nel XIII secolo* (Bologna, 1986), pp. 58-89. Some of Koenig's conclusions are problematized in P. Castignoli, "In margine dell'opera di John Koenig: una contrastata interpretazione del "Populus" piacentino nell XII secoli", *BSP*, 82 (1987). For a comparison with other

political relationships, privileging certain threads over others based on the politics of the chronicler. What emerges from this process is the weakness of Piacenza's communitarian consciousness. Power in these texts is located not so much in the institutions of the city – comparatively late to develop and weakened by civil war – but in the strongmen and clans which bent them to their will.[36] In particular are emphasised the deeds of Piacenza's *squadre*, five clans from the contado whose power was exercised through vertically constructed client networks, who by the end of the 13th century governed the administrative districts of Piacenza and divided among themselves ownership of its General Council. These were the Scotti, Fulgosii, Fontanesi, Anguissola, and Landi (formerly called the Anditi).[37] Relationships between *squadre* were variable but to a minimal degree determined by their party affiliations: the Scotti, Fulgosii, and Fontanesi identified with the Guelphs; the Anguissola and Landi, with the Ghibellines.[38] Their contest for supremacy distinguishes the narrative structure of Piacenza's historiography from the 13th century onward.

Two histories of Piacenza merit a detailed introduction: the anonymously written *Annales Placentini Gibellini* and Ripalta's *Chronica Placentina*. The *Annales Gibellini* received its title from its 19th-century editor G.H. Pertz, whose intention was to distinguish it from its rather anti-Hohenstaufen predecessor, the so-called *Annales Placentini Guelfi*.[39] As its adopted name would suggest, the *Annales Gibellini* favours the empire, an attitude signalled as early as its introduction, which is a reproduction of the

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cities in northern Italy, see G. Tabacco, "Ghibellinismo e lotte di partito nella vita comunale italiana", in P. Toubert and A. Paravicini Bagliani (eds.) *Federico II e le città italiane* (Palermo, 1995).

[36] For an overview of the Duecento, see P. Racine, "La discordia civile", *in Storia di Piacenza*, 2; P. Castignoli, "Dalla podestaria perpetua di Oberto Pallavicino al governo dei mercanti", in *Storia di Piacenza*, 2. R. Greci, "Piacenza nel Duecento: il panorama politico", in R. Greci (ed.) *Studi sul Medioevo emiliano: Parma e Piacenza in età comunale* (Bologna, 2009).

[37] The domination of the urban space by clans from the contado defined the political experience of the cities in what is modern-day Emilia, especially Piacenza, Parma, and Reggio. See D. Androzzi, *Piacenza 1402-1545. Ipotesi di ricerca* (Piacenza, 1977); Gentile, *Terra e poteri*; A. Gamberini, *La città assediata, Poteri e identità politiche a Reggio in età viscontea* (Roma, 2003).

[38] On the *squadre*, see C.E. Manfredi, "La nobilità di Piacenza", in *Le antiche famiglie di Piacenza e i loro stemmi* (Piacenza, 1979). Castignoli, *Liber daciorum et officiorum*, pp. 12-13. R. Bellosta, "Le squadra in consiglio. Assemblee cittadine ed élite di governo urbana a Piacenza nella seconda metà del Quattrocento tra divisioni di parte ed ingerenze ducali", *NRS*, 87 (2003).

[39] "Annales Placentini Gibellini", in G.H. Pertz (ed.) *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 18 (Hannover, 1863). Hereafter cited as APG.

Gesta Frederici imperatoris de rebus gestis in Lombardia.[40] The bulk of the history, whose purview ranges from 1220 to 1284, covers the military exploits of the *pars imperatoris* in Italy. Emphasised are the deeds of Frederick II and his would-be successors, and the military and political accomplishments of the rural *signori* in the Po Valley who operated under the auspices of the imperial party, namely Guglielmo Andito, his son Ubertino Landi, and Oberto Pallavicino. What has been said about the Guelph annals can be justly applied to its Ghibelline counterpart; that the text is "obsessively a chronicle of military expeditions, sieges of castles, victorious sorties, inglorious retreats, fires and devastations of harvests, destructions and constructions of hamlets and cities, etc., as if Italian life at the time did not consist of anything else."[41] The emphasis on violence dominates even the text's treatment of Ubertino Landi and Oberto Pallavicino, who are shown waging a military campaign in the contado following their temporary exile from Piacenza in 1257. But this no less makes Landi and Pallavicino the text's protagonists. As Bordini has observed, the intention of the *Annales Gibellini* is not to commemorate statecraft, but to appraise the valiant militarism of the rural *signori*, whose wealth and violence were what structured their relationship to the urban *populus*, coercing their vertical networks of clientele to execute their interests in the city.[42] In its aggrandizement of the violence of the nobility, the *Annales* can be considered an aristocratic history. This is in contrast to *popularis* texts like Azario's *Chronicon* or Fiamma's *Manipulus Florum*, which instead articulate the culture and values of urban commercialism.

A perspective more favourable to the Guelph party is found in the *Chronica Placentina* of Ripalta, which focuses on events in the Po Valley from the origins of Piacenza to 1372, with a later continuation pushing the text to 1374.[43] Ripalta draws on

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[40] For background, see B. Pallastrelli, "Prefazione", in B. Pallastrelli (ed.*) Chronica tria Placentina a Johanne Codagnello ab Anonymo et a Guerino conscripta* (Parma, 1859), pp. XIII-XXIX and D. Gatti, "Chronicon Placentinum", *in Repertorio della cronachistica emiliano-romagnola*, pp. 274-8.

[41] G. Arnaldi, "Codagnello, Giovanni", in *DBI*, 26 (Roma, 1982), p. 566: *ossessivamente una cronaca di spedizioni militari, di assedi di castelli, di sortite vittoriose, di ritirate ingloriose, di incendi e devastazioni di raccolti, di distruzioni e riedificazioni di borghi e città, ecc., come se la vita italiana del tempo non consistesse in altro...*

[42] S. Bordini, "La memoria di Ubertino Landi. Ricerche tra biografia e storiografia", in R. Greci (ed.) *Studi sul Medioevo emiliano: Parma e Piacenza in età comunale* (Bologna, 2009), pp. 298-99.

[43] P. Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina nella trascizione di Jacopo Mori (ms. Pallastrelli 6)*, M. Fillìa and C. Binello (eds.) (Vicenza, 1995).

biblical sources, classical authorities, Christian writers like Orosius and Bede, several Lombard histories, and above all the Guelph and Ghibelline annals, selectively exploiting them to redefine the narrative of Piacenza's political competition in a way sympathetic to the *pars Ecclesiae*.[44] References to the *pars Imperatoris* are eliminated, divorcing the party from the political culture of Piacenza. The rural aristocracy are still a formidable presence in the text, but Ripalta abridges the *Annales Gibellini* in a way that devalues the achievements of the philo-imperial Anditi/Landi and Pallavicini. When a member of the rural aristocracy receives favourable treatment, it usually follows that he has made a career out of obstructing the ambitions of the Ghibellines and the Visconti. So it is that Alberto Scotti, lord of Piacenza from 1291 to 1304, who in 1302 led a coalition of *signori* to overthrow Matteo Visconti, is said to be "a magnificent and generous man very loved by the people of Piacenza."[45] Ultimately, however, it is the church – and not any of Piacenza's clans or factional coalitions – that the text identifies as the salvation of Piacenza's political community. Thus in 1335, when Piacenza's Guelph government is overthrown, Ripalta mourns that the Piacentini were *miseri* and *ab humanitate relicti de dominatione sancta matris Ecclesie*.[46] Ripalta's narrative for 1371 to 1372, when the Visconti were at war with Gregory XI, evinces a similar partisanship, with Ripalta interpreting revolts by the Visconti's subjects as evidence of their loyalty to the church and their hatred of Visconti despotism.

Musso's narrative for the Duecento and Trecento generally relies on the *Annales Gibellini* and Ripalta's *Chronica*. The latter is heavily adapted, however, in order to negate its clerical perspective. Musso's *Chronicon* instead reverts to the framework used by the philo-imperial *Annales Gibellini*, privileging the experience of the *pars Imperatoris* and placing renewed emphasis on the leadership and military accomplishments of the leading philo-imperial clans of Piacenza and its contado.

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[44] On Ripalta's sources, see M. Casella, "La Cronaca di Pietro da Ripalta e le sue Fonti" *Archivio Muratoriano*, 11-12 (1913); A. Vasina, "Da Ripalta, Pietro", in A. Andreolli, D. Gatti, R. Greci, *et alia* (eds.), *Repertorio della cronachistica emiliano-romagnola* (Roma, 1991), p. 283.

[45] Quoted in L. Cerri, "Alberto Scoto, signore di Piacenza (1290-1318)", *Archivio storico per le province parmensi*, 12 (1912), p. 35. The quotation does not appear in the edited edition of the Pallastrelli text, but does in the original manuscript: Biblioteca Comunale di Piacenza, Cronaca monoscritta del fondo Pallastrelli, f. 151r: *vir magnificus et liberalis populo Placentino summe dilectus*.

[46] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 102: *Et exierunt miseri Placentini et ab humanitate relicti de dominatione sancte matris Ecclesie sub qua fuerant XIII annis et ultra.*

Consequently, the salient distinction in the text is not between *populus* and nobility, as it is in Fiamma's and Azario's histories, but instead is between the *pars Imperatoris* and *pars Ecclesiae*. The protagonists of the text – in particular the Landi, Pallavicini Fontanesi, and Scotti – are interesting to Musso primarily for their relationship to these parties (and to a lesser extent for their leadership of Piacenza's *populus*, implicitly valued as a source of legitimacy).

This chapter's deconstruction of Musso's text is divided into two sections. The first will focus on Musso's presentation of the 13th and early 14th centuries, a formative period for the identity of Piacenza and its aristocratic clans, whose freedom of action was at its greatest before the Visconti's acquisition of the city in 1336. Musso's narrative represents conflict during this period as primarily driven by clans associated with the *pars Ecclesiae* or *pars Imperatoris*. This narrative, however, is crafted in such a way that it disassociates the *pars Ecclesiae* from Piacenza's civic community, rewriting Musso's source material – both the *Annales Gibellini* and Ripalta's *Chronica Placentinia* – to emphasise the links that aligned Piacenza's *populus* and several of its leading clans – including the historically Guelph Fontanesi – with the politics of the empire. The Scotti, meanwhile, are vilified through their association with the *pars Ecclesiae,* to the effect that they are invalidated as political actors.

The chapter's second section will argue that it was the recent conflict with the church that shaped Musso's Ghibellinism, influencing the manner in which he characterized the last few centuries of conflict in Piacenza as a war between a legitimate *pars Imperatoris* and an illegitimate *pars Ecclesiae*. The solution Musso proposes for ending this cycle of violence is the empire's legitimisation of a *dominus naturalis* for Tuscany and Lombardy. The proposal, worded by Musso in the language of prophecy, seemingly alludes to the possibilities opened up by the coronation of Gian Galeazzo as duke of Milan in 1395, which many observers hoped would herald the beginning of a regional monarchy that would extend across northern Italy.[47] The section will focus both on Musso's narrative for the 1370s, which revises Ripalta's narrative so as to uphold the legitimacy of Visconti lordship, and on Musso's invective *Contra pastores*, which holds the church accountable for a millennium of violence in Europe. We will conclude by

[47] See footnote 171.

reflecting on the degree to which this Ghibelline language underpins the political identity Musso imposes onto the clans and *populus* of Piacenza.

Clans:

The Landi and Pallavicini

Turning to the Duecento, Musso's narrative seems unexceptional at first glance, entailing a rather dry account of the violent competition for power among Piacenza's clans and factions. But a Ghibelline perspective becomes apparent in the way that Musso privileges the experience of several philo-imperial captains, who over the course of the period exercised a pre-eminent role in the politics of the city: Oberto Pallavicino, Alberto Fontana, Guglielmo Anditi, and Ubertino Landi. While the captains and their exploits are also profiled by Ripalta, what distinguishes Musso's narrative is an emphasis on the captains' deep ties with Italy's imperial party and the contextualization of their actions within a narrative that pivots on the struggle between empire and church. The effect of this framework is to diminish the significance of the traditional divisions of the city – in particular horizontal divisions between *populares* and *milites* – to make its primary emphasis the conflict between the parties with which the clans were aligned: the *pars Imperatoris* and *pars Ecclesiae*. This shift in perspective is owed to Musso's usage of the *Annales Gibellini*, which informs the *Chronicon*'s narrative for the years 1233 to 1284, allowing it to deviate from (though not entirely dispense with) its otherwise strict reliance on Ripalta.

We will begin by focusing on the philo-imperial magnates that were central to both Musso's and the *Annales Gibellini*'s narrative of the Duecento: Guglielmo Andito, Ubertino Landi, and Oberto Pallavicino (Alberto Fontana will be treated in the following section). Given their significance, they deserve a brief introduction, though with the caveat that any attempt at a neutral account of their deeds is mediated by an imperfect historiography (and will, indeed, be challenged below). The Anditi/Landi were formerly vassals of the bishops of Piacenza and Bobbio, in whose service they gradually acquired territory in Piacenza's mountainous contado and the valley of the Po river. As early as 1132 the clan sometimes exercised authority in Piacenza as consuls and judges; by 1221,

Guglielmo Anditi was representing the interests of the *populus* as their podestà. [48] Pallavicino, too, came from an ancient and noble lineage, which traced its origins to a 10th-century *comes palatii*. His clan was less localized to the contado of Piacenza; in addition to possessing territory there, it held lands in the countryside of Cremona and Parma, extending down into Liguria.[49] In Musso's *Chronicon*, Pallavicino first appears in Piacenza in 1234, elected podestà of the city along with Guglielmo Anditi. The two formally declared Piacenza's allegiance to the empire that year, motivated by a desire to break from the Milanese political orbit. [50] In 1236, they were banned from Piacenza as part of a papal-led effort to impose a peace between the city's feuding *milites* and *populus*.[51]

Guglielmo Anditi faded into obscurity after his exile (there is no trace of him in the archival documentation post 1237), while Pallavicino served as podestà in Pavia (1239), Reggio (1243), and Como (1246). He was later appointed Frederick II's vicar in Lunigiana-Garfagnana.[52] In 1250, in the midst of the chaos following Frederick II's death, Pallavicino brokered a peace that allowed Guglielmo's grandson Ubertino Landi and other exiles of the *pars Imperatoris* to re-enter Piacenza.[53] In 1253, he became perpetual podestà of the city, with Ubertino exercising a *de facto* lordship at his side. Heavy taxation, however, soon led to the alienation of the city's merchants and guilds. In 1257, Pallavicino and Landi were exiled from Piacenza, leading the latter to take refuge with King Manfred of Sicily, to whom he was bound by familial ties (their relationship is

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[48] On Guglielmo Anditi, see V. De Donato, "Andito, Guglielmo de", in *DBI*, 3 (Roma, 1961). G. Albini, "Piacenza dal XII al XIV secolo. Reclutamento ed esportazione dei podestà e capitani del popolo", in J.C. Marie Vigueur (ed*.) I podestà dell'Italia comunale, Parte I: Reclutamento e circolazione degli ufficiali forestieiri*, 1 (Roma, 2000), pp. 420-4.

[49] On Pallavicino, see Z. Schiffer, *Markgraf Hubert Pallavicini: ein 'Signore' Oberitalien in dreizehenten Jahrhundert: eine Biographie* (Leipzig, 1904). E.N. Rocca, "La signoria di Oberto Pallavicino nella formulazione dei suoi atti di governo", *ASL*, 83 (1957). E. Occhipinti, "Pallavicino, Uberto", in *DBI*, 80 (Roma, 2014).

[50] Albini, "Piacenza dal XII al XIV secolo", p. 423. A. Haverkamp, "I rapporti di Piacenza con l'autorità imperiale nell'epoca sveva", in *Il Registrum Magnum del comune di Piacenza, Atti del convegno internazionale di studio (Piacenza, 29-31 marzo 1985)*, (Piacenza, 1985).

[51] Greci, "Piacenza nel Duecento: il panorama politico", pp. 169-170.

[52] On the vicariate, see O. Guyotjeannin, "I podestà imperiali nell'Italia centro-settentrionale", in *Federico II e le città italiane*, pp. 124.

[53] For a bibliography of Ubertino Landi, see G. Albini, "Le podesterie di Ubertino Landi", in *Studi sul Medioevo*, p. 173, 1n. C. Truffelli, "Appunti bio-bibliografici per Ubertino Landi", *Archivio storico per le province parmensi*, 54 (2002).

unclear, but it is likely that Isabella, the wife of Landi, was the sister of Manfred's mother Bianca Lancia). [54]

The fortunes of Pallavicino and Landi improved after the defeat of Ezzelino da Romano at the Battle of Cassano in 1259. Pallavicino, who had been part of the victorious war party, found himself master of all Lombardy, assuming offices in the region's leading cities: captain of Milan, podestà of Brescia, Parma, and Novara, and *de facto* lord of Bergamo, Tortona, Alessandria, and Cremona.[55] In 1261, he and Landi re-entered Piacenza to reclaim its lordship. The ascendancy of the imperial coalition lasted till 1266, when Manfred was defeated at the Battle of Benevento by Charles of Anjou. Landi's two sons were taken hostage on the field, and in July of the same year, papal legates entered Piacenza, limiting the council seats of the *pars Imperatoris* to a third and forcing Pallavicino and Landi into exile. Pallavicino's control of Lombardy was quickly lost, and in 1269 he died at the castello of Gusaliggio in Val Mozzola. Not until 1276 did Landi re-enter Piacenza; after four years he negotiated the release of his son Galvano, his other son having presumably died in incarceration. In 1283, Landi was again exiled as a consequence of a dispute with the ascendant Scotti clan. He was admitted back into the city in 1290 and died in 1298.[56]

Guglielmo Anditi, Oberto Pallavicino, and Ubertino Landi are central enough to the political narrative of Piacenza's Duecento that they could not be ignored by Ripalta, though he does diminish the significance of their careers by downplaying the intimacy of their relationship with the *populus* of Piacenza and depriving their actions of geopolitical context. Musso, by contrast, presents the captains as the central protagonists of his text, closely linking them to the *populus* of his city, who are said to have been *fratres* of Anditi and Pallavicino and are elsewhere said to have "derived great profit and utility and honour" from their lordship.[57] Meanwhile, the urban opponents of the captains are

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[54] E. Pispisa, "I Lancia, gli Angliano e il sistem di potere organizzato nell'Italia meridionale ai tempi di Manfredi", in R. Bordone (ed.) *Bianca Lancia d'Agliano. Fra il Piemonte e il Regno di Sicilia. Atti del convegno (Asti e Agliano, 28-29 aprile 1990*) (Asti, 1992).
[55] F. Menant, "Il lungo Duecento 1183-1311", in G. Andenna (ed.) *Storia di Cremona*, 2 (Brescia, 2003-2008), pp. 324, 326. Quoted in Albini, "Le podesterie di Ubertino Landi", p. 193.
[56] E. Angiolini, "Landi, Ubertino", in *DBI*, 63 (Roma, 2004).
[57] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 465, 473.

dismissed as *rebelles* and *proditores*.[58] A programme to aggrandise the captains crescendos in a eulogy for Pallavicino, appropriated from the *Annales Gibellini*:

He was indeed a very wise man especially in the workings of the world. More than any other he was a Lombard of Lombardy: lavish and curial, honest and perceptive in battle. He ruled for a long time all the *pars Imperii* in Lombardy and Tuscany.[59]

Another feature that distinguishes Musso's programme is the inclusion of biographical details that link the captains to the imperial party, an association all but absent in Ripalta, whose narrative is limited to noting that Pallavicino was a vicar of Frederick II and that Ubertino Landi was a guest at the court of King Manfred in 1257.[60] But from Musso's *Chronicon*, which relies on the *Annales Ghibellini*, we also learn that, in 1245, Frederick II had knighted in Cremona two men of the Anditi as *milites*; that, in 1258, Ubertino Landi was in the pay of Manfred; that, in 1267, Ubertino swore fidelity to King Conradin, receiving from him the county of Venafro; that, in 1268, Ubertino received *literae amicabiles et gratiosae* from the self-proclaimed Frederick III (the heir of Conradin and margrave of Meissen), who considered him *fidelissimus suus*; and also that King Manfred was a relation of the sons of Ubertino Landi.[61]

These details acquire greater meaning within the context of Musso's narrative for the 13th century, whose purpose was to reintroduce to Piacenza's historical consciousness the framework of struggle between church and empire that defined the *Annales Gibellini* but is discarded by Ripalta's *Chronica*. The different structures of the two narratives are first noticeable in how each describes events in 1236, when a coup resulted in the exile of Pallavicino and Anditi, at the time lords of Piacenza.

Ripalta's narrative interprets conflict in terms that reference the rivalry between Piacenza's *milites* and *populus*:

In the same year and month the *societas populi* congregated at San Sisto and, against the will of the lord marquis podestà [Pallavicino] and the lord Guglielmo Anditi, elected 12 captains for the cause of making peace with the exiled *milites*...In the same year, by will of the *societas populi*, the said captains in the court of the lord bishop gave themselves to cardinal Iacopo Pecoraria on account of the discord they had with the exiled *milites*, who had already given themselves to him.

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[58] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 463, 465. Also see fn x and x below.
[59] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 476: *Fuit enim sapiens multum in operibus Seculi, plusquam umquam fuerit aliquis Lombardus Lombardiae, largus et curialis, probus et sagax in proelio. Rexit enim per longum tempus totam partem Imperii in Lombardia et Tuscia.* And see APG, p. 531.
[60] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, pp. 82, 85.
[61] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 464 (a. 1245), p. 468 (Manfred's relationship to Ubertino's sons), p. 468 (a. 1258), p. 475 (a. 1267), p. 476 (a. 1268).

And then the said cardinal led the exiled *milites* to the city...And after he made peace among them, he gave to them in common the podestà Rainerio Zeno of Venice...Rainerio banned the podestà Lord Oberto Pallavicino and Lord Guglielmo.[62]

According to this account, the *populus* defy Anditi and Pallavicino in order to effect a reconciliation between their faction and the *milites*. Almost irrelevant to the narrative is the competition between church and empire, a geopolitical dimension which is hinted at only when the account specifies that it was a cardinal of the church who appointed the Venetian podestà that exiled Anditi and Pallavicino. Musso's narrative, though initially resembling Ripalta's account, adds new elements that re-contextualize its broader meaning. After Musso describes the circumstances of Raynerio Zeno's election, he writes:

And then the Piacentini were rebels against the empire. And Lord Rainerio Zeno, the podestà, destroyed the homes of Lord Guglielmo Anditi and banned him and Lord Oberto Pallavicino and certain men of the *populus*, because these men were sided with the emperor against the church. [63]

The passage relies heavily on the *Annales Gibellini*, whose narrative transforms the coup into an expression of conflict between the empire and church, with the enemies of the philo-imperial captains termed *Imperatori rebelles,* while the captains and their supporters are described as acting *contra Ecclesiam*.[64] To undercut the church's moral authority, Musso represents its podestà as excessively ruthless, not just expelling Anditi but levelling his property in the city. Also significant is Musso's addition that *certi de populo* were also banned. By emphasising that some members of the *populus* remained loyal to the captains, Musso weakens Ripalta's suggestion that the city was united against its former lords, and develops a theme that stresses the intimate relationship between the *populus* of Piacenza and the philo-imperial party.

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[62] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 81. *Eodem anno et mense societas populi congregaverunt se ad Sanctum Sixtum et contra voluntatem dictorum domini marchionis potestatis [Pallivicino] et domini Gulielmi de Andito elegerunt XII capitaneos causa faciendi pacem cum militibus extrinsecis...Eodem anno dicti capitanei de voluntate societatum populi in curia domini episcopi commisserunt se in dominum Iacobum de Pecoraria cardinalem de discordia quam cum militibus de foris habebabant, qui milites iam se commisserant in eum; et tunc dictus dominus cadinalis duxit milites de foris in civitatem...et facta inter eos pace dedit eis comuniter pro potestate Rainerium Zenum de Venetiis...Qui potestas bannivit dominum Ubertum Pellavicinum et dominum Gulielmum.*

[63] Musso, *Chronicon*, pp. 462-463: *Et exinde Placentini Imperatori fuerunt rebelles...Et etiam ipse Dominus Raynerius Zenus Potestas fecit destrui domos dicti Domini Guilielmi de Andito, et bannivit eum, et Dominum Obertum Palavicinum, et certos de Populo, quia tenebant cum Imperatore contra Ecclesiam.*

[64] APG, pp. 473-4.

The next moment of this programme appears in the text's narrative for 1250, when Piacenza returned to the lordship of the imperial party.[65] Ripalta's account of the year's events are limited to a couple of sentences. The first concerns the death of Frederick II; the second is a superficial notice of regime change in Piacenza:

In the same year the *populus* of Piacenza expelled the *milites* of the city, and then Oberto Iniquità was made podestà by the people of Piacenza.[66]

Ripalta's succinctness conceals the link between Frederick II's death and the coup in Piacenza, once again divorcing the experience of the city from the politics of the empire. There is no mention of the party affiliation of the podestà Oberto Iniquità, and insofar as any explanation for regime change is given, it would again seem to be related to factional conflict between the *populus* and *milites*. But Ripalta's simple schematic is complicated by Musso's more detailed narrative (running roughly a column's length). Produced below is an abbreviated version that highlights the most relevant details:

In the same year the *milites* of Piacenza were expelled from the city by the *populus*. In the same year all the *populus* of Piacenza elected in concord Oberto Iniquità as podestà and rector of the *populus* for one year. Those who were traitors to the *populus* and Guglielmo Anditi were worried to death. They believed that Lord Oberto Iniquità was a very imperial man...The men of the party of the *populus*, who had family and friends who had been exiled outside Piacenza, began to cry: "Let our brothers return: Let those who have been expelled from the city of Piacenza return." And because almost all of the *populus* wanted this, finally, because of the support of many friends, it was pleasing to Oberto Iniquità and to the *sapientes* that the men of the *populus*, many of whom were banned, should return to the city...Antolino Saviagata, who was the author of this novelty (*novitas*) at the instigation of the Scotti, to whom he was close, went as an ambassador to Milan with Guglielmo Anguissola...because he [Antolino] was unhappy about what he had done and because what he had done did not go as he wanted and because he was afraid of those whom he had expelled. Antolino was a poor man of vile condition. But he could do nothing, and he was expelled from the city of Piacenza, and he was exiled to the boundary [of the contado]. And so there was born a *pars* in the *populus*. Nevertheless the *pars* which is called the *pars imperatoris* prevailed. Those of the *populus* who entered the city of Piacenza did not cease to work so that those of the Anditi and others, who were outside Piacenza, should return to their homes.[67]

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[65] On events in 1250, see P. Castignoli, "La 'coniuratio' popolare del 1250 e il passaggio di Piacenza da campo guelfo a quello ghibellini", in *Studi in onore di Giuseppe Berti* (Piacenza, 1979).

[66] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 84. *Eodem anno populus Placentie expulit milites de civitate et tunc Ubertus de Iniquitate factus fuit a populo potestas Placentie.*

[67] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 465: *Eodem anno Milites Placentiae fuerunt expulsi de Civitate per populum. Eodem anno Populus Placentiae omnes in concordia elegerunt Ubertum de Iniquitate in Potestatem et Rectorem Populi usque ad unum annum. Illi, qui exstiterant proditores Populi et Guilielmi de Andito...dolerunt ad mortem. Tenebant enim ipsum Dominum Ubertum de Iniquitate nimis Imperialem hominem...Homines de parte Populi, qui habebant parentes et amicos extra Civitatem Placentinae expulsos, ceperunt dicere et vocare: "Veniant fratres nostri: veniant qui expulsi sunt de Civitate Placentiae". Et quia quasi omnes de Populo hoc volebant, tandem cooperatione multorum amicorum placuit Domino Uberto de Iniquitate, et Sapientibus, quod homines de Popolo, qui banniti erant tantum, redirent in Civitate...Antolinus Saviagata, qui fuerat auctor dictae novitatis ad instigationem Scotorum,*

Ripalta is merely the passage's starting point, with the narrative thereafter deriving primarily from the *Annales Gibellini*.[68] As before, this inheritance reframes the nature of the conflict to emphasise competition between the imperial party and the party of the church. Oberto Iniquità is now "a very imperial man" – whose election signals the emergence (really, resurgence) in Piacenza of what is explicitly termed here the *pars Imperatoris*. The text then shifts to the fate of one of its philo-imperial protagonists, the Anditi, whose previous humiliation by the cardinal-appointed podestà is reversed by the clan's triumphant return to the city.

But there are lingering questions. Who is Antolino Saviagata, and why is he called the "author of this novelty" (*auctor dictae novitatis*)? Why should the exile of Saviagata cause a rift in the *populus*? The lack of clarity here is a product of Musso's rather selective and not particularly coherent appropriation from the *Annales Gibellini*. In the *Annales*, it is in fact Antolino Saviagata who precipitates crisis in 1250, when he denounces Piacenza's presiding podestà for contravening the city's export restrictions by selling grain to Parma. The podestà is overthrown by an angry *populus*, who elect Oberto Iniquità and then call for the return of the city's exiles. But since Antolino Saviagata did not want the Anditi and their allies to re-enter the city, the *Annales* explains, he travels to Milan with the hope of creating an alliance "to return the city and its people to its prior state"[69]. When the *populus* learn of this betrayal, they arrest him, and then they torture him, until finally Oberto Iniquità intervenes for his release. The *Annales Gibellini* adds:

...what [Antolino Saviagata] did was pleasing to Oberto, since Oberto did not want the exiled Anditi and others to return to the city. He permitted [Saviagata] to leave unpunished, expelling him from the city to the borders.[70]

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quorum erat vicinus, ivit pro Ambasciatore ad Civitatem Mediolani cum Guglielmo Angusola...quia moestus erat ipse Antolinus de eo quod fecerat, quia factum non iverat pro ut volebat; quia revertebantur illi, quos fecerat expellere, quamvis esset pauper et vilis conditionis. Sed nihil potuit facere, et expulsus fuit de Civitate Placentiae, et positus fuit in confinibus. Et ita pars orta est in Populo; tamen illa pars, quae dicitur Imperatoris, obtinuit. Illi de Populo, quod in Civitatem intraverant, non cessabant laborare, quod illi de Andito, et alii, qui extra Placentiam adhuc erant, redirent ad propria.

[68] APG, pp. 499-502.

[69] APG, p. 501: *redire civitatem et populum ad priorem statum*.

[70] .APG, p. 501*: quod faciebat placebat domno Uberto de Iniquitate, nolebat enim dictus Ubertus quod banniti de Andito et alii redirent in civitatem, permisit eum abire impunem expelendo ipsum de civitate in confinibus*".

Musso's text leaves out many of these details, creating a more streamlined narrative that downplays the divisions within Piacenza's imperial party, an effect achieved by implying that Oberto Iniquità always supported the repatriation of the Anditi and by omitting reference to the many other families opposed to the clan's return (the *Annales* names other opponents of repatriation: Uberto de Mascaro, Ricardo de Agado, Roglerio Calderio, *et consimiles*).[71] In addition, by omitting reference to the true impetus for regime change in 1250 – the scandal over grain exports – Musso's *Chronicon* suggests that Oberto Iniquità rose to power solely because he was "a very imperial man", a suggestion that transforms the narrative, no longer a story about grain exports, into a story about a pro-imperial coup. The omission has particular implications for the text's representation of the *populus*. In their eagerness to expel their papal-backed podestà for "a very imperial man", they exceed even their characterization in the *Annales Gibellini* as supporters of the *pars Imperatoris*.

A similar agenda to emphasise the *populus*'s devotion to the imperial cause influences how Musso interprets the next shift of power in the city, brought about by the defeat of King Manfred, the naturalized heir of Frederick II, at the Battle of Benevento in 1266.[72] The defeat deprived Italy's *pars Imperatoris* of its standard bearer. The victor, Count Charles of Anjou, overran the south of Italy and then leveraged his success to support the prospects of the *pars Ecclesiae* in the north.[73] Ripalta, characteristically taciturn on the rivalry between empire and church, chooses to circumscribe the significance of the battle as purely local in importance:

Charles, count of Provence, brother of King Louis of France, who was crowned in February by Pope Urban IV as king of Sicily, and a great many crusaders entered Apulia against Manfred, the prince of Taranto, who had usurped the kingdom against the will of the church. Once the battle had been joined, Charles killed Manfred and obtained the kingdom of Apulia.[74]

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[71] APG, p. 501.
[72] N.B. Musso incorrectly dates the battle to 1265.
[73] Castignoli, "Dalla podestaria perpetua di Oberto Pallavicino", pp. 285-7. P. Grillo, "Un dominio multiforme, I comune dell'Italia nord-occidentale soggetti a Carlo I d'Angiò", in R. Comba (ed.) *Gli Angiò nell'Italia nord-occidentale* (Milano, 2006).
[74] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 86: *Karolus comes Provincie, frater Lodovici regis Francie, qui a domino papa Urbana quarto fuerat coronatus de mense februarii in regem Sicilie, cum magna multitudine crucicerorum intravit Appuliam contra Manfredum condam principem Tarentinum, qui predictum regnum contra voluntatem Ecclesie usurpaverat, et commisso prelio dictum Manfredum interfecit et regnum Appulie obtinuit*.

The only indication of Ripalta's partisanship for the *pars Ecclesiae* appears in the allegation that Manfred *usurpavit* his kingdom. But Musso, like the *Annales Gibellini*, avoids this language and instead describes the full geopolitical significance of the battle.[75]

In the same year Lord Charles and an armed band of many crusaders aggressively entered the Kingdom of Apulia against King Manfred, the prince of Taranto. Once the battle had been joined, Charles deprived King Manfred of his kingdom and his life...Once King Manfred was dead, there was great exultation and happiness among the Italians, that is to say the clerics and those who were of the *pars Ecclesiae*; others, however, who were of the *pars Imperii*, were aggrieved and sad.[76]

Continuing the narrative, Musso relies on the *Annales Gibellini* to explain that the church's victory carried particular implications for Pallavicino, hitherto Lombardy's most powerful lord, who was forced to renounce his dominion over Alessandria, Tortona, Pontremoli, and Lavagna, "because he was afraid of the aforesaid rebellions and the victory of Lord Charles, the King of Apulia, against King Manfred."[77] In Piacenza, too, Pallavicino, as well as Ubertino Landi, found their authority waning. Musso emphasises, however, that this was *not* because of domestic dissatisfaction. In a somewhat paradoxical fashion, it is explained that the people of Piacenza indeed desired and valued the lordship of the philo-imperial captains – despite demanding a change in regime:

Though the Piacentini had great *proficitus* and *utilitas* and *honor* with Lord Marquis Oberto Pallavicino and with Count Ubertino Landi, just as they liked, nevertheless they did not want nor desire their dominion. And seeing that the sons of Count Ubertino Landi were captured in war and were in the custody of King Charles, they thought it time and convenient that there begin to be words of concord with the church...[78]

The passage, again taken from the *Annales Gibellini*, is so apologetic it strains credulity, particularly in its allegation that it was the capture of Landi's children by

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[75] See APG, p. 516.

[76] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 473: *Eodem anno dictus Dominus Carolus cum praedicta multitudine Cruciferorum Regnum Apuliae armata manu potenter intravit contra Regem Manfredum quondam Principem Tarentinum, et commisso proelio ipsum Manfredum regno et vita privavit... Mortuo vero Rege Manfredo, inter Italicos magna exultatio et laetitia fuit, scilicet Clericos et illis, qui dicuntur de parte Ecclesiae; aliis vero, qui sunt de parte Imperii, dolor et tristitia.*

[77] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 473: *quia timebat de praedictis rebellionibus, et victoria Domini Caroli Regis Apuliae contra dictum Regem Manfredum*. Also see APG, p. 516.

[78] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 473: *...qui licet magnum profictum et utilitatem et honorem haberent cum Domino Oberto Marchione Pelavicino, et cum Comite Ubertino de Andito, sicut volebant, tamen eorum dominium non affectabant nec volebant. Et videntes, quod filii dicti Domini Comitis Ubertini capti erant in bello, et in fortiam Caroli Regis detinebantur, putaverunt tempus et conveniens esse incipere verba de concordia Ecclesiae.*

Charles of Anjou that prompted the Piacentini to seek reconciliation with the church, bizarrely veiling what was a revolt against the philo-imperial regime as an expression of devotion to the Landi.[79] Nevertheless, this rhetorical ju-jitsu succeeds at sustaining the text's premise that the *populus* of Piacenza were inherently supportive of the *pars Imperatoris*.

Musso's contextualisation of events after the Battle of Benevento, portrayed as an extension of the struggle between empire and church, also gives him opportunity to further vilify the latter. Again, a comparison with Ripalta is instructive. On Landi's exile from Piacenza in 1267, Ripalta's *Chronica* laconically relates that "Ubertino Landi was expelled from Piacenza by legates of the pope and Buoso da Dovara of Cremona."[80] By contrast, Musso paints a more graphic image. Landi is described as fleeing the city, while his supporters are "banned and robbed and their houses destroyed"; Pallavicino and Buoso da Dovara suffer similarly: their "*castra* were destroyed and innumerable evils done to them".[81] Once again, Musso's narrative manages to represent its church as the author of urban violence and civic division, all the while concealing divisions within the *pars Imperatoris* (note that Musso does not hold Buoso da Dovara responsible for Landi's exile – an alteration to Ripalta's narrative that also happens to be accurate).[82]

The reputation of the church is again a target in Musso's narrative for events in 1271, when the *intrensici* of Piacenza feel compelled to depose the papal-backed regime.[83] Musso explains:

> In the same year the Piacentini insiders, because they were deprived of aid from everyone on account of their evil works, and because there were born many schisms between them, seeing that they could not resist the aggressions of Ubertino Landi and the exiled party of Piacenza, decreed that they would put themselves in the custody of King Charles. On account of this decision, there were many divisions between them.[84]

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[79] APG, p. 516.
[80] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 86: *Ubertinus de Lando fuit expulsus de Placentia per legatos pape et Bosso de Dovaria de Cremona*.
[81] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 475: *banniti, et derobati, et domus ipsorum fuerunt destructae // castra fuerunt destructae, et infinita mala eis facta fuerunt*.
[82] On Buoso de Dovara, see E. Voltmer, "Dovara, Buoso da", in *DBI*, 41 (Roma, 1992).
[83] For background, see S. Fermi, "Intorno alla dominazione di Carlo I Angiò a Piacenza, *BSP*, 40 (1945). P. Castignoli, "L'alleanza tra Carlo d'Angiò e la nuova costituzione del comune", *BSP*, 69 (1974). P. Merati, "Fra donazione e trattato", in R. Comba (ed.) *Gli angiò nell'Italia nord-occidentale*, pp. 353-6.
[84] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 478: *Eodem Anno Placentini intrensici cunctorum auxilio destituti propter eorum mala opera, et quia se ad invicem multa schismata nata sunt, videntes non posse resistere Comitis Ubertini de Lando violentiis, et partis extrinsecae Placentiae, statuerunt se daturos in fortia Regis Caroli; de quo factae sunt magnae divisiones inter eos.*

The passage is appropriated from the *Annales Gibellini* (and, naturally, has no analogue in Ripalta).[85] The church is accused of provoking *multae schismatae* and its supporters of *mala opera*. And though the text refers to the *violentiae* (aggressions) of Ubertino Landi, this is not meant pejoratively, as it is juxtaposed against the *mala opera* of Piacenza's *intrinseci*, whose alleged misdeeds serve only to deprive the city of allies against Landi.

Rather than turn against Ubertino Landi for his *violentiae*, the people of Piacenza are later said to be inclined toward reconciliation. We learn that after negotiating a settlement with King Charles in 1275, "Count Ubertino Landi and his party came in peace to Piacenza, where they were honourably received."[86] The Latin comes from the *Annales Gibellini*, though it is Musso who emphasises that Landi came *in pace*, an addition meant to stress the captain's benign intentions and his peaceful reconciliation with the *populus*. The text tactfully omits that Landi also negotiated with the papacy for his repatriation, an omission that functions to avoid crediting the church with actual peace-making. [87] As with so much else relating to the philo-imperial captains, Ripalta makes no mention whatsoever of this episode. This silence continues into Ripalta's account for 1283, which neglects to mention an incident of conflict (soon resolved) between Landi and the people of Piacenza, an event otherwise included in both the narrative of the *Annales* and Musso's *Chronicon*.[88]

By relying on the *Annales*, Musso is able to restore the centrality of Oberto Pallavicino, Guglielmo Andito, and Uberto Landi to the Duecento, with the interpolations into Ripalta's narrative managed in a way that emphasise the captains' devotion to the philo-imperial party and the *populus* of Piacenza. A few adaptations are made to the *Annales* to better articulate this message, but at least in what we have excerpted so far, Musso generally appears faithful to his source. This, however, is not the case for his representation of Alberto Fontana, another captain central to his narrative of the Duecento. How Musso adapts the *Annales Gibellini* reflects a political programme aimed

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[85] APG, p. 551.
[86] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 480. *Comes Ubertinus de Lando cum aliis de parte sua venerunt in pace Placentiam, ubi recepti fuerunt honorifice.* APG, p. 562. See N. Luxardo de Franchi and E. Scapin, "Sulla pace del 1276 tra Ubertino Landi e Piacenza", *Archivio storico per le province parmensi*, 16 (1964).
[87] On negotiations with Pope Gregory X, see A. Samore, "Gregorio Papa e Ubertino Landi", *Archivio storico per le province parmensi*, 30 (1978).
[88] APG, pp. 576-77. Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 482.

not merely at projecting a philo-imperial identity onto a few clans, but at tightly associating that identity with Piacenza's wider aristocratic culture.

The Fontanesi

Alberto Fontana was *pater familialis* of the Fontanesi clan, a wealthy family from Piacenza's contado (on whose origins not much is known). [89] Originally a supporter of the *pars Imperatoris*, in the late 13th century Fontana gave his allegiance to the church. He participated in a coup in 1257 that toppled Piacenza's philo-imperial regime, which Fontana exploited to make himself podestà, earning him the scorn of the *Annales Gibellini*, which locates him in the ranks of Piacenza's *proditores* and associates him with *nequities*, including torture, extortion, and numerous other abuses. [90] This negative image still burdens Fontana's reputation today, remembered by Pierre Racine as a *tiranno.*[91] He was expelled from Piacenza in 1261, having outraged public opinion by pillaging and burning the contrada di San Salvatore, at the time in rebellion.[92] In the aftermath of the Battle of Benevento in 1266, however, Fontana was invited back into the city by papal legates who had seized control of its government. Another member of the clan, Guido Fontana, was named a *capitaneus fidelium ecclesie de Placentia*.[93] It is a testament to the animosity Alberto Fontana inspired that he was only in Piacenza two days before he was expelled by followers of Ubertino Landi. Yet in 1269, supported by allies among the Scotti and Pallastrelli clans (partisans of the *pars Ecclesiae*), he again became podestà of Piacenza, in which capacity he led an army that besieged the castle of Bardi, a Landi stronghold in the Ceno Valley.[94] He then became podestà of Bologna, a tenure mired in controversy, with the *Annales Gibellini* reporting that he was incarcerated for fraud.[95] In 1270 he appears back in Piacenza, refusing to support a war against Pavia. This alienated Fontana from Piacenza's church party, which supported the war.[96] The clan's position in the city further deteriorated in 1271, when a coalition of merchants and guilds, led by the

[89] For background, see P. Racine, "Fontana, Alberto, in *DBI*, 48 (1997).
[90] APG, pp. 509, 512
[91] Racine, "Fontana, Alberto", p. 608.
[92] APG, pp. 512-13.
[93] APG, p. 519.
[94] APG, p. 532.
[95] APG, p. 540.
[96] APG, p. 543.

Scotti, elected to give Piacenza to King Charles. The *Annales Gibellini* explains that this decision was made in part "to avoid the dominion of Alberto Fontana and the wickedness of others."[97] Alberto Fontana was banned from Piacenza in 1291, dying a year later.

The intention of Musso's *Chronicon* is to rewrite its source material to represent Alberto Fontana, and by extension the Fontanesi, as supporters of the *pars Imperatoris*, implying a wider allegiance to the empire among the city's aristocracy. The *Chronicon* accurately characterizes Alberto Fontana as an ally of the party prior to 1257, a relationship which is also testified to in the narrative of the *Annales Gibellini*. The *Chronicon*, however, expands the *Annales* account by supplementing its narrative with elements found neither in the *Annales* nor indeed Ripalta's *Chronica.* This includes alleging that, in 1226, Alberto Fontana and Guglielmo Anditi had together been captains of the *populus* of Piacenza; that in 1231, Fontana joined Guglielmo Anditi to expel Piacenza's regime of *milites*; that in 1233 Fontana, Guglielmo Anditi, and the *populus* together created an alliance with the Cremonesi; and that in 1250 the exiled Fontanesi and Landi were among the families that the *populus* expressly wished to repatriate to Piacenza.[98]

More inventive is how the *Chronicon* describes Fontana's relationship to the captains of the *pars Imperatoris* after 1257. Uniquely, the text alleges that in 1269 Oberto Pallavicino's testament entrusted his children to Alberto Fontana (as well as to, among others, Ubertino Landi and Buoso da Dovara) and that in 1271 both Alberto Fontana and Ubertino Landi were worthy recipients of a letter from the king of Castile, a patron of the *pars Imperatoris* in southern Italy.[99] Since in 1269 Fontana was still in league with the Pallastrelli (Pallavicino's enemies) the rapprochement implied by Pallavicino's supposed testament would have been unlikely. Yet by making the claim and then by associating Fontana with Ubertino Landi two years later, the *Chronicon* functions to downplay the severity of his split with the philo-imperial clans, even suggesting their continued partnership after 1257.

Just as important to the text's programme is how it rewrites the narrative of Fontana's actions from 1257 and 1270, when he was aligned with the enemies of the

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[97] APG, p. 551: *affectant dominium regis ut evictent dominium Alberti de Fontana et ceterorum scelus.*
[98] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 460, 460-1, 465.
[99] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 476, 478.

philo-imperial captains. Musso does not erase the memory of Fontana's treacherous break with the *pars Imperatoris*, but he does at least represent events between 1257 and 1261 more positively than its souce material. The *Annales* links Fontana with *proditores contra illos de Andito et alios de populo*; the *Chronicon* merely writes that Fontana acted *contra illos de Andito et alios de Populo*.[100] The *Annales Gibellini* alleges that Fontana brutalised his enemies in the city, punishing Guizardo Anditi and Giraldo Turrano with torture (*ad tormentum posuit*); in the *Chronicon*, the worst of Fontana's actions is expulsion of political enemies and the exaction of fines. The *Annales Gibellini* alleges that these fines were imposed "without cause" (*nulla causa*); the *Chronicon* is silent about their (absence of) legal rationale. [101] Finally, the *Annales* alleges that Alberto Fontana was expelled in 1261 because of his violent repression of a revolt in the squadra di San Salvatore; the *Chronicon* mentions his expulsion, but omits mention of the bloody events in San Salvatore.[102]

A programme of suppression continues into Musso's entry for 1266, when legates of the church took power in Piacenza. Musso's text omits that the papal legates appointed Guido Fontana a *capitaneus fidelium ecclesiae* and that they permitted Alberto Fontana to re-enter Piacenza, omissions that serve to disassociate the Fontanesi clan from the *pars Ecclesiae*. The narrative, to be sure, does locate Alberto Fontana in the city in 1266, but his arrival is seemingly on his own initiative.[103] In addition, the text does not allege that Fontana was expelled after two days by supporters of the Landi, as does the *Annales Gibellini*, removing the suggestion that his return provoked conflict with the *pars Imperatoris*.[104] With similar intent, the *Chronicon* omits the *Annales Gibellini*'s identification of Fontana as the leader of the army that besieged Bardi, Ubertino Landi's fortress in the Ceno valley (instead, the *Chronicon* merely relates that "the Piacentini insiders with the aid of the men of Milan and Parma besieged the castle of Bardi").[105] The

[100] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 468. APG, 509.
[101] APG, p. 509. Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 468.
[102] APG, pp. 512-13.
[103] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 474.
[104] Fontana is expelled in the *Annales*. See APG, p. 519.
[105] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 476: *Placentini intrinseci cum auxilio gentium Mediolani et Parmae posuerunt obsidionem circa Roccam de Bardi*.

text also omits that Fontana committed fraud as podestà of Bologna, once again offering the reader a less sinister characterization of Fontana than that found in its source.[106]

Lastly, the *Chronicon* is less critical of the desirability of a Fontana regime in 1271, when Piacenza was given to Charles of Anjou. While the *Annales* explains that the Scotti gave the city to Charles "to avoid the lordship of Alberto Fontana and the wickedness of others [*cetererorum scelus*]", Musso's *Chronicon* more neutrally states that the Scotti wanted "to avoid the lordship of Alberto Fontana and others [*ceteri*]."[107]

The text's representation of the family naturally contrasts with the narrative found in Ripalta's *Chronica*, which gives Alberto Fontana altogether short shrift. Although he is referenced on six occasions, five of these references amount to a short statement relating either to an expulsion from the city or the attainment of political office. Exceptional is the *Chronica*'s entry for 1246**,** which states that Alberto had conspired to give Piacenza to Frederick II's son, Enzo.[108] Musso's text appropriates this meagre narrative, and supplements it to portray Fontana as a relatively faithful supporter of the *pars Imperatoris*. The negative imagery of the *Annales Gibellini* is meanwhile supressed to whitewash Fontana's reputation for fraud and violence.

The text's positive representation of the Fontanesi even extends into its narrative for the early Trecento, which privileges Leo Fontana as one of the players at the centre of a coup that toppled the Torriani regime in Piacenza, leading to Leo Fontana becoming *dominus* of the city in 1309.[109] There is a small degree of truth in this account; Leo had participated in the coup, but afterward only became a podestà. By stating that Leo became *dominus* afterwards, however, the *Chronicon* suggests that he played a far more important role in the liberation of the city from a philo-*ecclesia* clan. This contradicts Musso's source, Ripalta, who reports (accurately) that it was Alberto Scotti who had expelled the Torriani to become *dominus*. [110] It is to this family that we now turn.

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[106] APG, p. 540.
[107] APG, p. 551: *ut evictent dominium Alberti de Fontana et ceterorum scelus*. Musso, p. 478: *ut evitent dominium Domini Alberti de Fontana et ceteros*.
[108] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 83 (a. 1246), 84 (a. 1257), 85 (a. 1260), 86 (a. 1266), 88 (a. 1277), 89 (a. 1291)
[109] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 487.
[110] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 92.

The Scotti

The removal of a Scotti from the historical record is not the execution of a programme of *damnatio memoriae.* To the contrary, the Scotti have a greater presence in Musso's history than they do in Ripalta's *Chronica*. This is somewhat surprising. The Scotti were Guelphs and, at the beginning of the Trecento, frequently hostile toward the Ghibellines and the Visconti. The clan's portrayal by Musso does nothing to conceal this hostility, rendering the Scotti a notable exception to a programme intended to demonstrate the philo-imperial identity of Piacenza. So, too, there are mentioned in the text other clans hostile to the imperial programme: the Pallastrelli, the Fulgosii, the Arcelli, the Carii.

The contradiction is resolved if we understand Musso's *Chronicon* as a matrix of clan relationships, mapping loyalties and antagonisms based on a selective memory of the actions of clan *signori*. A clan received legitimacy through its association with emperors or imperial contenders. While the text effortfully adapts its source material to identify both Ghibelline and Guelph clans with the empire, this programme was not absolute. Because of either personal malice or ideological sentiment, the *Chronicon* appears unwilling to identify certain clans with its network of philo-imperial actors, instead emphasising their hostility to its agenda. The most negative coverage is given to the Scotti – Piacenza's dominant *squadra*. Musso locates it both outside Piacenza's community of Ghibellines and its civil society, disassociating the Scotti from Piacenza's *populus* while emphasising the self-serving duplicity and violence of its most famous exponents, Alberto and Franceschino Scotti. The effect is to preserve the *Chronicon*'s pretence that the *populus* favoured the *pars Imperatoris* and to vilify the Scotti as dangerous Others.

A brief summary of the the Scotti's history will help contextualize the details of Musso's narrative. The clan came to prominence in the middle of the 13th century. A wealthy family from the *populus*, they achieved notable success in banking and trade, in particular as Italy's principal importers of English wool.[111] They had participated in the coup of 1257 that placed Alberto Fontana in power. In the 1270s, the head of the clan, Rinaldo Scotti, leveraged his close ties with Pope Gregory X (himself a man of Piacenza)

[111] P. Racine, "Una grande figura di signore italiano: Alberto Scotti (1252?-1318)", *BSP*, 76/2 (1981), pp. 146-8.

to facilitate the formation of a philo-clerical government in Piacenza that was dominated by the city's merchants and guilds.[112] The clan was ascendant in the city for the next few decades, with Rinaldo's nephew Alberto Scotti becoming its lord from 1290 to 1304. As a sign of his devotion to the *populus*, he named his palace in the centre of the city the *domus populi* and took the title *defensor populi civitatis et districtus placentie*.[113] He was expelled from Piacenza on several occasions, the last time in 1313 by Galeazzo Visconti. He died in exile in 1317.

Alberto had tried but failed to create a signorial regime, in imitation of the strongman governments begining to emerge in other cities of northern Italy. Nevertheless, the clan maintained a strong influence over the politics of the city. Alberto's son Franceschino succeeded his father as leader of Piacenza's *populus*. His most notable achievement was to orchestrate a coup in 1335 that overthrew the regime of the church, which had governed Piacenza since 1322. Less than a year after the coup, however, Franceschino was compelled to surrender the city to Azzone Visconti, albeit receiving in return substantial privileges.[114] Henceforth, the Scotti enjoyed an intimate relationship with the Milanese signoria and unrivalled status in Piacenza, with the family controlling 50 seats in Piacenza's General Assembly, in contrast to the 25 claimed by each of the four other *squadre*.[115] Franceschino's grandson, Francesco Scotti, served as the Visconti's podestà in several cities of the territorial state, including Milan. Indeed, such was the Visconti's trust in him that, in 1376, an afflicted Galeazzo II wrote to Francesco, then podestà of Bologna, requesting a cure for gout from the city's excellent collection of medical literature. [116] In 1394, he was knighted as a *miles* by Gian Galeazzo.[117]

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[112] Albini, "Piacenza dal XII al XIV secolo", pp. 428, 431.
[113] Racine, "Una grande figura", p. 170.
[114] A. Gamberini, "Il cartulario degli Scotti di Piacenza fra memoria familiare e cultura pattista", in *Lo Stato Visconteo: Languaggi politici e dinamiche constituzionali* (Milano, 2002), pp. 237-8.
[115] The Scotti remained Piacenza's dominant *squadra* through the Sforza period. See Bellosta, "Le 'squadre' in consiglio", esp. pp. 12-13. On *squadre*, see p. 169.
[116] The letter was conserved by the family in its cartulary collection. See Gamberini, "Il cartulario degli Scotti", p. 240.
[117] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 556.

Musso refers to a Scotti as early as 1250, and references the family on six other occasions between then and 1290, the date of Ripalta's first mention of the clan.[118] Musso's knowledge of the clan's activity prior to 1290 largely derives from the *Annales Gibellini*, with most references linking the clan either to the *pars Ecclesiae* or with actors aligned with its mission, such as the papal legates that visited Piacenza in 1266 or Charles of Anjou, whose lordship of Piacenza was supported by Rinaldo Scotti.[119] Just as important is what Musso's *Chronicon* ignores from the *Annales Gibellini*. The text omits that in 1250 the *populus* invested Rinaldo Scotti as an officer in Piacenza's district of San Lorenzo; that in 1267 Rinaldo led an army to rescue a besieged Buoso da Dovara (a Cremonese captain aligned with the *pars Imperatoris*); and that in 1271 Rinaldo had purchased from Piacenza the *castrum de Gravaga,* an important castle in the Ceno valley, near Bardi.[120] (Indeed, the *Chronicon* instead claims that the castle was controlled by a relation of Ubertino Landi, the aptly named Alberto de Gravaga de Anditi.[121]) The omissions, respectively, serve to disassociate the Scotti from Piacenza's *populus*, disassociate the clan from an imperial captain, and undermine the basis for the family's authority in the contado.

There are two notable exceptions to a programme mainly aimed at depicting the clan as an antagonist of the *pars Imperatoris*. In 1278, *illi de Scottis* are identified as one of several clans to have opposed sending troops to assist the besieged Torriani in Lodi, a decision that would have served the interests of the Torriani's philo-imperial rivals, the Visconti. Indeed, the only clan identified by the *Chronicon* as supporting military action is the Pallastrelli. At least on this occasion, it is the politics of this particularly Guelph family that the text functions to isolate and discredit.[122] Another reference to the Scotti records that the daughter of Rinaldo Scotti was married to the son of Ubertino Landi in 1280.[123] It is likely that Musso acknowledges the marriage because it reflected well on

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[118] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 465 (a. 1250), 467 (a. 1257), 472 (a. 1260), 474 (a. 1266), 478 (a. 1271), 481 (a. 1278, 1280).
[119] On the family's relationship to Pope Gregory X, see P. Racine, "Gregorio X e i banchieri piacentini", *Archivio storico per le province parmensi*, 28 (1976).
[120] APG, pp. 500 (a. 1250); 521 (a. 1267); 552, 554 (a. 1271).
[121] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 479.
[122] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 481.
[123] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 481.

the status of the Landi, ignoring what the event's inclusion in his chronicle might signify about the politics of the Scotti.

Musso's portrayal of Rinaldo sets the stage for his representation of Alberto and Franceschino Scotti, who are also disassociated from the *populus* and linked to the enemies of the *pars Imperatoris*. It was a programme that required some alteration to Ripalta, Musso's source for the period. In Ripalta's text, Alberto is uniquely remembered as a heroic figure, a *vir magnificus et liberalis populo Placentino summe dilectus.*[124] The description recalls the populism that had historically been central to Alberto's political success, elsewhere alluded to when Ripalta twice calls Alberto the *protector Placentie* (evoking the populist title he gave himself, *defensor populi*).[125] In Musso's *Chronicon*, however, Alberto is disassociated from his political base, with the text neglecting to call Alberto a *defensor Placentie* and omitting that he was loved by the *populus* as a *vir magnificus*. The omissions help to sustain the text's implicit argument that the *populus* of Piacenza instead favoured the *pars Imperatoris*/Ghibellines.

Some of Ripalta's narrative was used by Musso. The text repeats that it was Alberto Scotti, in 1302, that led a broad coalition of *signori* who overthrew Matteo Visconti (allowing the the Torriani to return to power in Milan); that, in 1307, the Scotti facilitated the installation of a Torriani regime in Piacenza; and that, in 1312, Alberto temporarily regained lordship of Piacenza under the auspices of the Ghibelline party, only to exploit his position to expel the Landi.[126] All three of these passages serve to link (accurately) the Scotti with the politics of the Guelphs.

Conversely, the text suppresses parts of Ripalta's narrative that represented Alberto Scotti in cooperation with the Ghibellines. This explains Musso's choice – mentioned earlier – to replace Alberto Scotti with Leo Fontana as the orchestrator of a coup that overthrew Piacenza's Torriani regime in 1309.[127] Similarly, the text neglects to report that it was Alberto Scotti who led a delegation of Guelphs that sued for peace with Piacenza's Ghibellines in 1314.[128] Instead, the *Chronicon* identifies Leo Arcelli and

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[124] For citation, see footnote 45.
[125] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 89.
[126] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 484-85, 486, 489. Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, pp. 89-90, 91, 93-4.
[127] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 487.
[128] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 95.

Jacopo Saginbene as the peacemakers, both exponents of traditionally Guelph families, though ones of notably less stature.[129] What all this amounts to is a programme, based on a selective usage of Ripalta's *Chronica*, to present a less eccentric portrait of Alberto Scotti, rendered by Musso into a consistent enemy of the *pars Imperatoris*.

Musso's narrative for the career of Franceschino takes a different approach. Franceschino had overthrown Piacenza's clerical regime in 1335, so he could not be presented as an agent of the *pars Ecclesiae*. Musso instead attacks his character, emphasising the violence and duplicity of the signore. This unflattering image of Franceschino takes shape early in the text. Franceschino is first introduced to the reader in 1304, as he leads a band of soldiers who capture a *multitudo virorum et mulierum* at Caselle. The soldiers are portrayed as exceedingly thuggish, amputating the fingers of the female prisoners to facilitate the looting of their rings – altogether one of the more gruesome episodes in Musso's and Ripalta's history (whence the anecdote is derived). [130]

Franceschino is next referenced against the backdrop of the political upheaval of 1335 and 1336. Once again, a comparison with Ripalta is instructive. Ripalta remembers not one but two coups in that period – one by the Scotti against the government of the church and another by the Visconti's allies against the government of the Scotti.

> In the year of the lord 1335 on the 25th of July, during the feast of the apostle Saint James, the Piacentini, rising up in arms, began a riot. For the party of the Scotti put to the flight the party of the Fontanesi and Fulgosii...And then Franceschino Scotti was made lord of Piacenza. And the miserable Piacentini, now abandoned by the *humanitas* [of the church], left the lordship of the holy mother church...In January of the same year [now 1336] Azzone Visconti, lord of Milan and many other Lombard cities, desiring also the lordship of Piacenza, requested it from Franceschino Scotti, who refused to agree to any pact (*pactum*). For this reason, Azzone negotiated with the exiled Piacentini, that is with the Fontanesi and the Ghibellines, so that they might make a single league against Franceschino.[131]

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[129] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 490.

[130] In Ripalta, the butchery is dated to 1303. See Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 90. See also Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 485.

[131] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, pp. 102-3: *Anno Domini MCCCXXXV die XXV iulii, in festo sancti Iacobi apostoli, Placentini ad arma insurgentes seditionem in civitate fecerunt. Nam pars Scotorum illos de Fontana et de Fulgoxiis cum eorum parte de Placentia fugaverunt...Et tunc dominus Franciscus Scotus factus fuit dominus Placentie. Et exierunt miseri Placentini et ab humanitate relicti de dominatione sancte matris Ecclesie...Eodem anno* [1336] *de mense ianuarii dominus Azo Vicecomes, dominus Mediolani et quamplurimum civitatum Lombardiae, affectans etiam dominium Placentie, requisivit a dicto domino Francisco Scoto dominium civitatis Placentie, qui nullo pacto assentire curavit; propter quod predictus dominus Azo tractavit cum Placentinis extrinsecis, scilicet de Fontana et gibellinis, ut fierent unius voti adversus dictum dominum Franciscum.*

The narrative concludes by detailing Azzone's successful conquest of the city. Given Ripalta's Guelphism, it is no surprise that the narrative reflects poorly on Franceschino, identified as the agent responsible for the removal of the Piacentini from the church's *humanitas*. Azzone's acquisition of Piacenza, however, is no more legitimate, since Franceschino refuses to make any pact that would transfer lordship to the Visconti lord (*qui nullo pacto assentire curavit*). Now consider Musso's version:

In the year of Christ 1335 on the 25th of July, during the feast of the apostle Saint James. the Piacentini, rising up in arms, began a riot. For the party of the Scotti, which had started the riot, and the people of Lord Azzone Visconti put to the flight the party of the Fontanesi and Fulgosii...And they left the lordship of the holy mother church...In January of the same year [now 1336] Lord Azzone Visconti, lord of Milan and many other Lombard cities, desiring lordship of Piacenza, requested it from Lord Franceschino Scotti, as he had promised to do (as is said). He refused to agree. For this reason Azzone negotiated with the exiled Piacentini, that is with the Fontanesi and the Ghibellines, so that they might make a single league against Franceschino.[132]

While omitting its source's philo-papal rhetoric, the *Chronicon* deprives Franceschino of any legitimate claim to the city. His initial victory against the church is no longer even his own, but is facilitated by support from the *gentes Domini Azonis Vicecomites Domini Mediolani*. In addition, Franceschino is now a duplicitous agent, violating an earlier promise to give Piacenza to the Visconti. The charge of 'agreement-breaking' was a particularly damaging accusation to make against the Scotti, whose cartulary collection made frequent recourse to a language of *pactismo* (stressing the sanctity of agreements between lords and their subjects) in order to assert the inalienability of privileges granted by the Visconti.[133]

The cumulative effect of Musso's representation of the Scotti compares to that of a short work by the Franciscan friar Oberto de Morgomo, titled *De antiquitatibus, nobilitatibus, dignitatibus, laudibus, et honoribus Civium Placentiae, et de eorum gestis:*

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[132] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 496: *Anno Christi MCCCXXXV. die XXV. Julii in festo S. Jacobi Apostoli, Placentini ad arma insurgentes, seditionem in Civitate fecerunt; nam pars Scotorum facta seditione illos de Fontana et de Fulgosiis cum eorum parte de Placentia fugaverunt cum gentibus Domini Azonis Vicecomites Domini Mediolani... Et tunc dominus Franciscus Scotus factus fuit Dominus Placentiae. Et exierunt de dominatione Sanctae Matris Ecclesiae...Eodem anno de mense Januarii Dominus Azo Vicecomes Dominus Mediolani, et quamplurium Civitatum Lombardiae, affectans etiam dominium Civitatis Placentiae, requisivit a dicto Domino Francisco Scoto dominium Civitatis Placentiae, prout promiserat, ut dicitur. Qui ullo modo voluit assentire. Propter quod predictus dominus Azo tractavit cum Placentinis extrinsecis, scilicet de Fontana et Gibellinis Bardellis, ut fierent unius voti adversus dictum dominum Franciscum.*

[133] Gamberini, "Il cartulario degli Scotti".

omnia sub compendio.[134] Written in the late 14th or early 15th century, the text partly exists as a list of the privileges and deeds of Piacenza's nobility, including the Fontanesi, Landi, Anguissola, and Fulgosii. Absent from this litany of clans are the Scotti, a clear repudiation of their noble status, though one not without basis, given that the family was not officially recognized as nobility (by the Visconti) until 1414.[135] (In similar vein, Musso observes that the appointment of Franceschino's grandson Francesco as podestà of Perugia violated the city's statutes, "because someone cannot be a podestà of Perugia if he is not a *miles*".)[136] Alberto Scotti nevertheless makes an appearance in Morgomo's text, but only in an excerpted notarial act. The document concerns the election in 1307 of Visconte Pallavicino and Lancillotto Anguissola as *abbates, gubernatores, and rectores* of Piacenza, an election it praises for bringing about the *conservatio et pacificus status* of the city and *populus*, which – the text underscores – were outcomes achieved "to the confusion and destruction of Alberto Scotti and his followers and all the rebels of the present *status* and *populus* of Piacenza". [137] The language is caustic: Alberto Scotti and his followers are *inimici* and *rebelles* of the *status* and *populus* of Piacenza. By resurrecting this document – conspicuous as the only primary source to appear in the text – Morgomo's history articulates a set of divisions similar to those constructed by Musso's *Chronicon*, which juxtapose, on one hand, the Guelph Scotti with, on the other hand, the *populus* of Piacenza and its philo-imperial aristocracy. As in Musso, the salient divide is not just between clans, but between civic society and its opponents.

That both texts were produced at the end of the Trecento/early Quattrocento is in part a reflection of the tense relationship that existed between the Scotti and especially the Ghibelline clans of Piacenza. Such was their rivalry that, in 1402, following the death of Gian Galeazzo, Manfredo and Ludovico Scotti led the mob that expelled the Anguissola and most of the Landi from the city.[138] Musso's and Morgomo's texts compensate for the political weakness of the Ghibelline faction by arbitrating the

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[134] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 585-9.
[135] Racine, "Una grande figure", p. 145.
[136] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 556: *quia aliquis non potest esse Podestas Perusii, si non est Miles.* Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 586: *ad confusionem et destructionem Alberto Scoti, et sequacium suorum, et omnium inimicorum rebellium praesentis Status et Populi Placentini*.
[138] D. Andreozzi, "La crisi del ducato di Milano e i suoi riflessi nel Piacentino fina all'ascesa di Filippo maria Visconti", in *Storia di Piacenza*, 3/1, pp. 98-106.

legitimacy of Piacenza's clans, a programme that functioned to the detriment of the Scotti.

The Visconti, the Church, and Piacenza

Musso's text is at once restrictive and inclusive, communicating a singular philo-imperial ideology that caters to diverse clans, factions, and social groups while excluding several of Piacenza's leading clans. The key to understanding its identity politics is Pope Gregory XI's war with the Visconti. The impetus for the conflict was Bernabò's conquest of Reggio in 1371. The papacy responded to the aggression by entering into an alliance with the Estensi against the Visconti. By 1372, papal armies had occupied the Val Tidone and the western district of Piacenza's contado. So confident was Pope Gregory of the imminent conquest of Piacenza that he sent a letter to its nobility and *populus* encouraging rebellion against Visconti tyranny.[139] The fortunes of the church changed when its armies were abandoned by its Savoyard allies (who were rapidly coming to fear the papacy's territorial ambitions), leading to the conclusion of a temporary peace with the Visconti in 1375. Conflict resumed that year, however, when Florence declared war on the Holy See and enlisted the Visconti as their unlikely allies. This second phase of the war, known as the War of Eight Saints, ended in 1377, when Gregory XI died in Rome. A formal peace was signed a year later.[140] The seven years of conflict are significant for having engendered a fierce debate over the privileges of the church and the very idea of the *libertas* of Italy, drawing in polemicists on both sides.[141] No doubt influenced by their proximity to events, Musso and Ripalta were both participants in this intellectual exchange, with their histories reflecting contrasting judgements over the role of the church in temporal affairs and the legitimacy of secular government.

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[139] P. Castignoli, "Dal governo di Azzone all'ascesa al potere di Gian Galeazzo", in *Storia di Piacenza*, 3/1, pp. 59-60. For Gregory's letter, see C. Poggiali, *Memorie storiche della città di Piacenza*, 6 (Piacenza, 1757-1766), p. 367.

[140] On the war, see P. Partner, *The Lands of St. Peter: The Papal State in the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1972), pp. 358-367. S. Dale, "Contra damnationis filios: The Visconti in fourteenth-century papal diplomacy", *JMH*, 33 (2007), pp. 17-26.

[141] There is much more documentation on Florence than Milan. See R. Trexler, *The Spiritual Power: Republican Florence under Interdict* (Leiden, 1974), p. 115. D. Peterson, "The War of the Eight Saints in Florentine Memory and Oblivion", in William Connell (ed.), *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence* (Berkeley, 2002), pp. 187-193.

Ripalta's *Chronica*, produced during the height of the papal armies' success, heralds the advent of a new clerical order by appropriating a distinctively Guelph outlook. We have previously observed the extent to which the text's description of urban conflict in the Duecento and early Trecento favours the political programme of the *pars Ecclesiae*. This partisanship is again conspicuous in its narrative for the church's invasion of Visconti territory in 1372, which the text justifies by citing examples of rural communities that defected to the papacy and of conquered territories whose allegiances were converted to the superior government of the church. It is a narrative that surely expresses the philo-clerical sympathies of at least some of Piacenza's own population, who would have recalled that, after all, the city had been legal property of the church since 1322, when its General Assembly granted dominion of the city to Pope John XXII.[142] Lingering support for the church is perhaps why Musso's history, though composed almost a decade after the end of the war, overtly engages with this clerical perspective. His *Chronicon* not only rewrites Ripalta's account for 1372 to assert the innate superiority of Visconti lordship, but it augments the narrative with passages that inveigh against the rationality of those who rebelled in favour of the clerics. This is followed by a lengthy excursus attacking the intrinisic legitimacy of clerical lordship. Musso concludes that the only legitimate political system is the empire, in which the Visconti served as legitimate hereditary lords (an allusion to the coronation of Gian Galeazzo). This section of Musso's history is the most expressly ideological of the text, articulating a poignantly Ghibelline language of empire and anti-clericalism. By deconstructing this language, we can begin to appreciate the ideological undercurrents of Musso's historical thought, thus offering an explanation and purpose for the Ghibelline identity that Musso imposed onto his narrative for the 13th and early 14th centuries.

Ripalta tells us that the church invaded Piacenza's contado in 1372, and admits that much of the clerics' initial victories can be attributed to their military might, with their armies inspiring *tantus terror* that many nobles surrendered their fortified fiefdoms *absque pugna.*[143] As the war progressed, however, Ripalta stresses that it was the Visconti's malgovernance that most contributed to the success of the church. Consider the

[142] P. Castignoli, "Il governo del legato pontificio Bertrando del Poggetto (1322-1336)", in *Storia di Piacenza*, 3, pp. 27-39.
[143] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 122.

case of Castel San Giovanni, one of the more strategically important castles in the district. In the early months of 1372, its inhabitants secretly negotiated their defection to the papacy, a decision taken in response to Galeazzo Visconti's demand that 100 hostages be detained "from the community's better men" (*ex melioribus hominibus*), a measure – ironically – that aimed to disincentivize revolt. [144] According to Ripalta, other localities of the Val Tidone came to prefer the government of the church when they recognized the "very good order" (*bonus ordo valde*) provided by the church's regional captain, Dondacio Malvicino Fontana. Thus, when in 1373 Galeazzo Visconti arrived in the valley with the intention of recapturing it, "he did not discover any fortification which wanted to return to him."[145]

A similar story runs through Ripalta's narrative for events in the contado of Bergamo, where the communities of the Valle San Martino are alleged to have freely "returned themselves to the people of the church" (*gentibus Ecclesie se reddiderant*), seemingly motivated either by genuine fidelity or by resentment toward the Visconti.[146] (The verb *reddere*, incidentally, provides an additional justification for the church's conquests, referencing the papacy's past ownership of territory. The verb is also applied to acquisitions in Piacenza's contado.) Again, attempts at re-conquest by the Visconti were stymied by local resistance. When the son of Bernabò Visconti, Ambrogio, tried to retake the valley, his armies were overwhelmed by the zealous defence of the valley's inhabitants, with Ambrogio himself killed in battle. Even Ripalta acts surprised by the ferocity of the resistance, a rhetorical flourish intended to emphasise the depths of the inhabitants' devotion to their new lords.

> Behold! From every part of the valley its inhabitants were roused to arms with their friends and indeed with other armed men of the church. They met [Ambrogio's] armies and vigorously fought them.[147]

Ripalta's *Chronica* ends in 1374. What makes its narrative so effective is the implicit appeal to the principles of a *politicum dominium*, which located the legitimacy of

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[144] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 123.
[145] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 123: *Sed non invenit munitionem aliquam que se vellet ei reddere, quia bonus ordo valde erat datus custodibus dictorum castrorum per dominum Dondacium Malvicini de Fontana, militem extrinsecum Placentie tunc capitaneum Castri Sancti Iohannis pro Ecclesia..*
[146] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 126-7.
[147] Ripalta, *Chronica Placentina*, p. 127: *Ecce habitores ipsius vallis in multitudine copiosa in armis concitati cum amicis eorum et certis etiam armigeris ex gentibus Ecclesie ab omni parte occurrerunt dicto exercitui* (of Ambrogrio) *et contra eos durissime conflixerunt.*

clerical lordships in the consent and ultimate sovereignty of the people.[148] Even if by the late Trecento the Visconti had mostly abandoned this doctrine to represent themselves as natural lords, the concept retained enough validity for it to be used as a powerful rhetorical device, posing a significant challenge to Musso, who had to re-interpret what these rebellions signified about the legitimacy of Visconti lordship.

Musso accordingly deviates from Ripalta's account, using his narrative to assert the desirability of Visconti lordship and to dismiss the legitimacy of its detractors. "And indeed many *castellani* were not rebels" Musso explains, "and many rebels committed horrible and nefarious crimes and murders, as much against the persons and property of their brothers and friends as against the persons and property of their kin and neighbours."[149] In addition to maligning the rebels as thieves and murderers, the text pejoratively labels them *rustici*, a term the *Chronicon* applies both to the inhabitants of Castel San Giovanni and the Valle San Martino (Ripalta neutrally uses the terms *illi de Castro Sancto Iohanne* and *habitores*, respectively).[150] Musso's *rustici* – consonant with urban prejudices against country peasants – behave erratically. When the *rustici* of Castel San Giovanni revolt, it is seemingly out of an irrational cluelessness, since Musso neglects to mention that what drove them to revolt was Galeazzo Visconti's attempt to take hostages from the community.

Musso's text then launches into an explicit denunciation of the folly of the rebels:

> And those who believed that they were made better by the advent of the pastors of the church were made worse. And they did not know the *bonum statum* which they had from the Visconti before the aforesaid's advent. And indeed they would have been worse off, if the pastors of the church had succeeded.[151]

The irrationality of the rebels is exceeded by their ingratitude, as they fail to appreciate the merits of Visconti lordship. "Those who were more faithful to Lord Galeazzo

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[148] See chapter on Morigia, page 132, footnote 152.
[149] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 516: *Et etiam plures castellani non rebelles...et plures rebelles commiserunt horribilia et nefanda scelera et homicidia tam in personis et havere fratrum, et sociorum eorum, quam in personis et havere aliorum consortum et propinquorum eorum.*
[150] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 516, 519.
[151] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 517: *Et illi, qui credebant melius stare per adventum gentium Pastorum Ecclesiae, peius steterunt, et non cognoscebant bonum statum, quem habebant a Dominis Vicecomitibus ante adventum praedictorum. Et etiam peius stetissent, si dicti Pastores Ecclesiae prosperassent...*

Visconti", Musso adds, "cannot say that they ever had an injustice done to them."[152] Musso then flips Ripalta's argument, stating that it was the papal regime that lacked popular support, citing as evidence a string of rebellions in 1375.

> ...First the Perugians with their city withdrew themselves from the subjugation of the pastors, and they destroyed all the fortifications which were in the city of Perugia, and they levelled them to the ground, and they placed themselves under the flag of liberty, and they liberated themselves from the yoke of the evil pastors. And then within a few months, with the aid of the Florentines and the Perugians and others, more than 60 cities in the lands of the Romagna, the Marche, the duchy of Spoleto, the patrimony [of Saint Peter], and the Roman Campagna, which were all under the dominion of the church pastors, withdrew themselves from their yoke. And they came under the *consanono* of liberty, and placed themselves in liberty. And this happened, because they [the pastors] made an evil regime, and justice perished in their and their officials' hands.[153]

Musso borrows from the lexicon of the Florentine chancellery, then under the direction of Coluccio Salutati, who framed the war against the papacy as a struggle for Italian *libertas*.[154] The term's usage by Musso is somewhat surprising. While *libertas* in this context could be limited to meaning independence from the pope's vicars, the term more broadly implies complete political autonomy, as well as a sense of justice and resistance to oppression, which would seem to have been its intended meanings by the Florentines and their allies.[155] A principle of urban sovereignty, however, would have been difficult to accord with the hegemony of the Milanese signoria, which explains why Musso does not elaborate on the theme. Instead, his critique of the church transitions to focus on related issues of *malum regimen* and *(in)iustitia*. The text develops this invective

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[152] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 517: *Et in veritate Dei melius tractabantur, quam illi, qui erant plus fideles dicti Domini Galeaz de Vicecomitibus; et non possunt dicere, quod eis facta fuerit umquam aliqua iniustitia.*

[153] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 521: *Qua de causa primo Perusini cum eorum Civitate se recesserunt a subiectione dictorum pastorum, et diruerunt omnes fortilitias, quae erant in dicta Civitate Perusiae, et funditus everterunt, et posuerunt se sub Vexillo Libertatis, et se liberaverunt a iugo dictorum malorum Pastorum. Et subsequenter et intra paucos menses cum auxilio dictorum Florentinorum et Perusinorum et aliorum, omnes Civitates et Terrae Romandiolae, Marchiae, Ducatus Spoleti, Patrimonii, et Campagnae de Roma, quae erant plusquam LX. Civitates, quae omnes erant sub dominio dictorum Pastorum Ecclesiae, recesserunt iugo eorum, et venerunt sub Consanono Libertatis, et posuerunt se in libertate. Et hoc accidit, quia faciebant malum regimen, et iustitia peribat in manibus eorum et Officialium eorum.*

[154] See Salutati's letter to the Romans in L. von Pastor (ed.), *History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages*, 1 (Saint Louis, 1902-1953), p. 366. Cited in G. A. Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society: 1343-1378* (Princeton, 1962), p. 300.

[155] On the usage of *libertas*, see J. Rubinstein, “Florence and the Despots: Some Aspects of Florentine Diplomacy in the Fourteenth Century”, in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (1952). On the language of *libertas* during Florence's war with Gian Galeazzo, see A. Lanza, *Firenze contro Milano* (Roma, 1991). For context, also see S. Cohn, *Lust for Liberty: The Politics of Social Revolt in Medieval Europe: 1200-1425* (London, 2006), pp. 85-86.

with other arguments that draw from a long tradition of anti-clericalism, contesting the legitimacy of the temporal power of the papacy and indicting the church for its complicity in a long history of violence.

The intellectual inheritance of Musso's polemic has been surveyed by Castignoli. Influences include Vincent of Beauvais's *Speculum Historiale* and Martin of Opava's *Chronica Martiniana*. Both texts are cited by Musso, who came into contact with them through his association with a local Dominican convent, San Giovanni in Canale. Excerpts from the chronicles defend the principle of clerical poverty ("He who posseses God...can have nothing beyond God") and make a historical argument for the emperor's authority over the pope ("Pope Adrian and the entire synod gave to Charlemagne the right to elect the pontiff and to ordain the apostolic seat, a dignity which the Patriarchate also granted").[156] While Musso's *Chronicon* is otherwise not directly interested in the relationship between the papacy and empire, it does expatiate on the theme of clerical poverty, a position it elsewhere justifies by appealing to the authority of Christ: "If you want to be perfect [*perfectus*], go and sell everything which you have and give to the poor."[157] The sentiment reflects the rhetoric common to the radical Franciscan movement, the Fraticelli, whose ideal of perfect poverty required the renunciation of all worldly dominion. For opponents of clerical power, like Musso, it was an argument well suited to justifying the relegation of clerical authority to the spiritual sphere.[158] Other influences on the *Chronicon* can also be detected (though they are never cited), with Castignoli (perhaps too ambitiously) identifying in the genealogy of Musso's anti-clericalism the

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[156] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 536-7 (citing Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Historialis*, bk. 17, c. 26): *Qui possidet Dominum...nihil extra Dominum habere potest...* Ibid., p. 547 (citing the *Chronica Martiniana*): *...Adrianus Papa cum universa Synodo dicto Carolo Magno ius eligendi Pontificem, et ordinandi Sedem Apostolicam, Dignitatem quoque Patritiatus dedit.* On the dissemination of Vincent of Beauvais, see C. Scarpati, "Vincenzo di Beauvais e la letteratura italiana del Trecento", in G. Billanovich, M. Prandi, and C. Scarpari (eds.), *Lo 'Speculum' di Vincenzo di Beauvais e la letteratura italiana dell'età gotica*, *Italia medioevale e umanistica*, 19 (1976).

[157] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 536: *Si vis esse perfectus vade et vende omnia, quae habes, et da pauperibus*. The passage is also quoted by William of Ockham, who in turn cites as his source St. Ambrose's *De Officiis*. See Guilelmus de Ockham, *Opera Politica*, edited by H.S. Offlier, 2 (Manchester, 1963), p. 611.

[158] N. Havely, *Dante and the Franciscans: Poverty and the Papacy in 'Commedia'* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 182-3

DNA of Marsilius of Padua, Dante Alighieri, John of Jandun, William of Ockham, John Wycliffe, Henry of Langenstein, and Alvarus Pelagius. [159]

Of these luminaries, Marsilius of Padua shines brightest. Musso channels the second book of the *Defensor Pacis* to locate in the church's desire for territorial acquisition the primary cause of the last millennium of violence in Christendom.[160] "Because pastors of the church want to attend more to the temporal than the spiritual, all Christianity is at war", Musso explains. "If the pastors had attended to spiritual affairs – as they should – the whole world would be at peace, especially the Christians."[161] The church's role in the repeated outbreak of war was not a passive one. Like Marsilius, Musso understands violence as the corollary of the church's insatiable desire for earthly authority, and accordingly dates the beginning of violence to the reign of Pope Sylvester, when the church received stewardship of the empire via the Donation of Constantine, beginning its involvement in the temporal sphere. Tellingly, Musso never actually cites the Donation by name – intentionally avoiding the acknowledgement of the document that, in Musso's mind, was ultimately responsible for Pippin's and Charlemagne's invasions of Italy, the wars of Frederick II, the wars for Angevin ascendancy in southern Italy, the 100 Years' War, and the recent usurpation of the throne of Peter I, king of Castile and León. All these conflicts, Musso clarifies, were started with the purpose of promoting the temporal interests of the church. The chronicler concludes:

> and so it seems clear that the pastors caused innumerable wars, or made to be caused innumerable wars, for the sake of their temporal dominions. On account of which countless thousands of Christians died, and many curses, destructions, difficulties, and tribulations came to the world, and especially to the greater part of Italy.[162]

This excursus is one of the few moments in which Musso's text explicitly articulates an ideological position. It is a testament to the profound impact that the recent

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[159] Castignoli, "Il pensiero politico", p. 181-2

[160] The best discussion of Marsilius's anti-clericalism appears in G. Garnett, *Marsilius of Padua and 'The Truth of History'* (Oxford, 2006).

[161] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 523: *Quia Pastores Ecclesiae volunt plus intendere temporalibus, quam spiritualibus tota Christianitas stat in guerra, qui si dicti Pastores solum intenderent spiritualibus, sicut debent, Mundus totus staret in pace, et maxima Christiani.*

[162] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 535: *et sic clare videtur, quod dicti Pastores innumerabiles guerras moverunt, seu moveri fecerunt pro iam dictis eorum dominiis temporalibus, et eorum occasione, propter quae infinita millia Christianorum mortua sunt, et tot maledictiones, destructiones, et angustiae, et turbationes in mundo venerunt, et maxime in maiori parte Italiae.* The claim was provocative enough to compel one of the more pious of Musso's readers to write in the margins of the manuscript that violence predated the church, as evinced by the biblical story of Cain and Abel.

war against Gregory XI had on Musso's thinking, attracting him to an interpretation of clerical violence that he also localizes into Piacenza's historical consciousness as the struggle between the *pars Imperatoris* and *pars Ecclesiae*. His arguments are resonant of the polemic against clerical power that emerged during Pope John XXII's war with the Visconti, some four decades earlier. The similarity of the rhetoric is a reflection of the similarity of the political situation, as the Visconti once again found themselves defending against a Guelph crusade.

Just as important is how the contest with Gregory XI influenced Musso's thinking about government. In line with contemporary political philosophy, Musso deemed *iustitia* to be one of the fundamental obligations of lordship, and so identifies the absence of *iustitia* as the reason for the string of revolts against the church in 1375:

> The reason that the lands and cities of the church often rebelled against the pastors is that the aforesaid pastors sent to their cities and lands their brothers, grandsons, uncles, relatives, and friends as rectors so that they might become rich. They are not accustomed to rule, and for the most part are of vile condition...And because the pastors are alive for a short time while in office, their officials do not much care about anything except, that is, doing everything for the sake of money. How can they become rich, if they do not commit injuries, violence, extortions, and injustices and if they do not allow justice to perish for the sake of money?[163]

By Musso's account, the problem with clerical government was one of avarice and self-interest – faults he does not identify as specific to the clergy, but suggests are related to a more general condition of human greed. His concerns reflect those of his contemporary, Guglielmo Centeuri (courtier at the Pavese court and bishop of Piacenza between 1383 and 1386), who wrote in his *De iure monarchiae* that the fundamental problem of government was incentivising a ruler to value the *bonum illius respublicae* when his post-lapsarian nature led him to value only the *bonum proprium*. [164] Centeuri argues that this dichotomy was overcome in a hereditary lordship, wherein the private and the public

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[163] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 527: *Causa, quia Terrae et Civitates Ecclesiae saepe rebellabant dictis Pastoribus, est, quia dicti Pastores transmittunt in dictis Civitatibus et Terris eorum fratres, nepotes, avunculos, et alios eorum propinquos, et amicos pro Rectoribus, qui non sunt consueti regere, et pro maiore parte sunt vilis conditionis, ad hoc ut ipsi efficiantur divites. Et quia pastores paucum vivunt in dictis dignitatibus, dicti eorum Officiales non curant nisi de eorum facto tantum, scilicet omnia pro denariis facere. Quomodo possunt fieri divites, si non faciunt iniurias, violentias, extorsiones, et iniustitias, et dimittant perire iustitiam pro denariis?*

[164] Guglielmo Centuri da Cremona, "Trattato <<De iure monarchiae>>" edited by C. Cenci (Verona, 1967), p. 120. Cited in B. Baldi, "<<Pro tranquillo et pacifico statu humanae reipublicae>>: Guglielmo Centueri fra religione e politica nell'età di Gian Galeazzo Visconti", in A. Gamberini, J. Genet, and A. Zorzi (eds.) *The Languages of Political Society* (Roma, 2011), p. 137-8.

were aligned in the absolute authority of the monarch. "What sane man would say that the king of France, in defence of his kingdom, would expose himself and his men to harm because it is so excellent a kingdom?" Centeuri asks. "Rather, he does this because it is *his* kingdom [my emphasis]."[165] Centueri concludes that this is why the Visconti signoria, a hereditary lordship, so zealously provided for the justice, peace, and tranquillity of its dominion.[166] Although Musso is more interested in the behaviour of corrupt courtiers, it seems that he agreed with Centeuri that a hereditary monarchy was preferable to the clerical system: "And if their [the church's] dominions passed through hereditary succession...that would be something", Musso laments. "But clerical dominions are never inherited..."[167]

All this is to suggest that behind Musso's critique of clerical lordship is a positive argument for Visconti governance, represented as the antithesis of the corruption and injustice of the clerical regime. While the *Chronicon* contains occasional passages extolling the qualities of certain *signori* (calling Galeazzo II a *dominus sapientissimus* and Ambrogio Visconti *armorum valentissiumus, et liberalis in donando*), its most startling statement happens to be its most opaque. After expatiating on the iniquities of the church, Musso strikes an optimistic tone by predicting that a *Dominus naturalis* would emerge to create a new political order in Lombardy and Tuscany.[168] Couched in the irrefutable and providential language of prophecy, the passage surely alludes to the political potentials presented by the recent coronation of Gian Galeazzo as a duke of the empire, which many hoped might lead to a powerful regional lordship.[169]

It is believed that finally the tyrannies, and especially those which are in the lands of the Roman Empire, will be annulled by one powerful tyrant, who will be made by the Roman emperor a *Dominus naturalis* of the cities and lands that now hold tyrants in the province of Lombardy and also in the province of Tuscany.[170]

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[165] Guglielmo Centuri da Cremona, "Trattato", p. 120-1: *Quis enim sanae mentis principaliter diceret, regem Franciae in defensionem regni sui se et sua exponere principaliter quia est tale regnum? Sed potius quia est suum.* Cited in Baldi, "Pro tranquillo et pacifico statu humanae reipublicae", p. 138.
[166] Baldi, "Pro tranquillo et pacifico statu humanae reipublicae", pp. 141-2.
[167] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 522-23.
[168] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, pp. 519, 520.
[169] On the coronation, see J. Black, "The emergence of the duchy of Milan: language and the territorial state", in *Reti Medievali Rivista*, 14/1 (2013).
[170] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 530: *...creditur, quod finaliter dictae Tyranniae, et specialiter quae sunt in Terris Imperii Romani, annullabuntur per unum potentem Tyrannum, qui per Imperatorem Romanum fiet Dominus naturalis de Civitatibus et Terris, quas nunc tenent dicti Tyranni in dicta Provincia Lombardiae, et etiam in Provincia Tusciae.*

In the passage's emphasis on legitimacy, it compares to the sentiments of another observer: "The tyrant of Lombardy disappears; the legitimate prince and sovereign takes his place."[171] Both afford a central place to the empire as the essential agent for effecting the transformation of a tyrant to a lord. The effect is to validate the emperor's role as hegemon and political arbiter, subscribing to a theory of empire expressed in Dante's *Monarchia*, which tasked the supreme *Monarcha* with transforming illegitimate regimes into legitimate lordships.[172]

And yet, the salient issue was not merely the legitimacy of the Visconti signoria. For Musso, just as important was the re-ordering of northern Italy under a single *dominus*. Again, the church is located at the centre the problem, with its interference in temporal politics blamed for the region's political plurality. The *causa Tyranniarum*, Musso explains, had been the church's decision to excommunicate Frederick II in 1229, an act that catalysed rebellions of strongmen across Italy that aligned themselves with the *pars Imperii* and the *pars pastorum Ecclesiae*.[173] For the remainder of the Duecento and Trecento, the church had tried in vain to eliminate the tyrants, but only created more violence in the process. Musso's *naturalis dominus*, however, represents the definitive reversal of this political chaos, promising to restore to the region the imagined unity of Frederick II's empire.

Musso's prophecy is fundamentally Ghibelline, repudiating the right of the church to intervene in the temporal sphere and validating the empire as the key to creating a legitimate political order. Again, a comparison with the political language of the 1320s is apt, when the Ghibelline opponents of John XXII appealed to the sovereignty of the empire to justify their right to rule (basing their legitimacy on the vicariates received from Henry VII and then Louis of Bavaria). It follows that the primary reason Musso appeals to the legitimacy of the empire is because it offered an ideological counterweight to the politics of the church. Within a political system still fundamentally based on

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[171] G. Romano, "Nuovi documenti Viscontei tratti dall'archivio Notarile di Pavia", *ASL*, 16 (1889), p. 312. Translated in D.M. Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan* (Cambridge, 1941), p. 174.
[172] Dante Alighieri, *Monarchia*, edited by P.G. Ricci (Milano, 1965), I, XII, pp. 159-60. Quoted in C. Dolcini, "Il pensiero politico", in D. Quaglioni (ed.) *Storia della Chiesa: La crisi del Trecento e il papato avignonese*, 9 (Milano, 1994), p. p. 416. On this passage, see also G. Zanella, *Machievalli prima di Machievalli* (Ferrara, 1965), pp. 59-68.
[173] Musso, *Chronicon Placentinum*, p. 530.

political universalism, the empire alone offered a means of justifying local lordships against the ambitions of the papacy. The genius of Musso is to maximise the space for Visconti political action within this universalist framework, adapting that framework to the signoria's own desire to establish itself as a hereditary monarchy and regional power.

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Musso's history exemplifies the way that the political conflicts of the signoria could impact the categorization of local identities, a process that inevitably affected their historical representation. Academics have traditionally observed a brief reawakening of the Visconti's Ghibelline identity after the ducal coronation of 1395. Gian Galeazzo's testament is one example of this phenomenon. Considering the language of Musso's *Chronicon*, however, it may be more accurate to date the re-emergence of Ghibellinism to the beginning of 1371, the start of the war with Gregory XI. It is troubling, however, that aside from Gian Galeazzo's will, there is not much evidence that the regime fully embraced Ghibelline nomenclature either after 1371 or after 1395. Indeed, in the same year that Gian Galeazzo's testament required that his son Giovanni Maria be a Ghibelline, Gian Galeazzo decreed that an individual had the right to choose his own party affiliation, repealing an earlier measure which had mandated that Guelphs declare themselves Ghibellines.[174]

All this attests to a general caution surrounding the use of political idioms. Indeed, Musso himself appears reluctant to employ the terminology. One explanation is that party affiliations were so ingrained in Piacenza's aristocratic identities that to impose an explicitly Ghibelline label onto a traditionally Guelph clan, like the Fontanesi, would have been implausible. Musso therefore chooses to imply political affiliation by associating clans with loosely coordinated networks loyal either to the church or to the empire. The effect is that, without using the term Ghibelline, Musso could identify Piacenza's *populus* and most of its clans with the Ghibelline programme. It is with recourse to this ideological identity that Musso arbitrates the legitimacy of Piacenza's

[174] Biblioteca Trivulziana di Milano, manuscript 1420, "Decreta ducalia pro Cremona", f. 73r, 1401 April 22, Belgioioso. Cited in Gentile, "From commune to regional state", p. 103.

clans (to the detriment of the Scotti) and ties Piacenza and several of its clans to the Visconti, dukes of the empire and undisputed champions of the Ghibelline cause.

And yet, ironically, Musso's version of Ghibellinism was equally capable of generating conflict with the signoria. We need only consider a decree issued by Giovanni Maria Visconti on 28 August 1406, which pardons Ghibellines who are called *proditores* and *sceleratissimi* and are maligned as those "who gave aid to rebels and in our duchy had most wickedly laboured with them to bring about property damage, slaughter, plunder, and injury to our subjects."[175] The document alludes to a revolt of nobles against Giovanni Maria during the first years of the interregnum, who justified their actions by alleging that the young lord had betrayed his own Ghibelline identity. (They chose to back Antonio and Francesco Visconti, the great grandchildren of the brother of Matteo Visconti.)[176] First on the list of the pardoned: Giovanni Musso.

[175] Carlo Morbio (ed.), *Codice Visconteo-Sforzesco, Ossia Raccolta Di Leggi, Decreti E Lettere Famigliari Dei Duchi Di Milano* (Milano, 1846). p. 41: *aliqui vero nostris opem prestare rebellibus, et in nostro ducato cum eisdem ad damna, caedes, praedas et iniurias subditorum nefandissime laborasse.*
[176] N. Valeri, "Guelfi e ghibellini in Val Padana all'inizio del ducato di Giovanni Maria Visconti", *Bollettino Storico-Bibliografico Subalpino*, 37 (1935), pp. 247-8.

Conclusion

The histories surveyed in this thesis originate from diverse geographies, react to diverse events, and reflect diverse interests. The methodology used to deconstruct each text has reflected this variety. To understand Fiamma, we have focused on his use of archetypal categories and have accounted for the differences between his text's factional narratives, concluding that his histories were intended to legitimate the Visconti signoria within the mental frameworks of Milan's various social constituencies. To understand Morigia, we have considered how he interweaves his political narrative for the 1320s and 1330s with the liberation narrative from 1 and 2 Maccabees. In addition, we have deconstructed his text's language of absolutism, contextualising it within an intellectual tradition of biblical, Roman, and medieval authoritarianism. Concerning Azario, we have unpicked the meaning of his use of the term *popularis status* and have considered how he utilised popular rhetoric to defend the commercial and urban values of the *populus*. And concerning Musso, we have carefully traced the influence of anti-clerical thought on the content of his narrative for the *res gestae* of Piacenza's clans, with particular consideration to how he adapted the *Annales Gibellini* and Pietro Ripalta's *Chronica*. These are very different themes and methods of textual deconstruction. No doubt, we could have limited our purview to focusing on thematic elements across texts: for example, how they each contend with factional conflict or how they interpret the common good. But this approach would have carried the risk of forcing each text into an interpretative paradigm not optimally tailored to their peculiarities. Consequently, we have endeavoured to treat each text independently, focusing on the specific language and rhetorical strategies that distinguish their narratives. The result has been a set of chapter that have engaged with unique intentionality and expressions of political identity.

Given that these texts were produced in a relatively confined geographic space, it is worth reflecting on why we should have encountered such diversity. Why is only Fiamma interested in archetypes? Why do only Morigia and Azario use their texts to legitimate the autonomy of the locality? Why is only Musso interested in the lineage of aristocratic clans (beyond the Visconti) and the rivalry between the *pars Ecclesiae* and

pars Imperii? After considering these questions, we will sum up by drawing some general conclusions about how the texts conceptualise the territorial state and the *civitas*.

Unique Histories

Characteristic of the work of Fiamma, but not our other histories, is a typological narrative of the ancient past that anticipates the institutions of communal Milan and above all the authoritarianism of the Visconti signoria. The Roman tribune, for instance, prefigures Milan's credenza. The *archiflamen* is the antecedent of the archbishop. Even the conflict between Milan's ancient Catholics and Arians is an archetype, adumbrating the war between the Guelphs and Ghibellines. In similar vein, the monarchism of the Visconti is foreshadowed by the authoritarianism of ancient kings, dukes, and counts – among other signorial actors. This recourse to a mythic past is a powerful tool of legitimisation (or, in the case of the Catholics and Arians prefiguring the Guelphs and Ghibellines, at least explanation), serving to normalise what might otherwise seem novel. This rhetorical strategy, however, does not have much analogue in our other texts. The histories of Morigia, Azario, and Musso are devoid of ancient figures that prefigure the modern. Instead, these texts prefer (at times, with an element of accuracy) merely to stress the ancient origin of modern institutions. So it is that in in Bonincontro Morigia's *Chronicon*, the creation of the basilica of Saint John coincides with the founding of Monza. Similarly, in Azario's *Chronicon de gestis*, Novara's *popularis status* comes into being with Novara itself. In Musso's history, the fifth age of the world (dated to the beginning of the *captivitas Judeorum*) sees the creation of the empire under Caesar, while the sixth and final age of the world (dated to the *nativitas Christi*) witnesses the creation of the church.[1]

Fiamma, to be sure, employs a similar tactic when he legitimates the Visconti by tracing their ancestry to the Trojan prince Aeneas. But why should only Fiamma rely also on archetypes to legitimate and foreshadow the modern? The primary reason would seem to be that he alone, of all our historians, had a sophisticated knowledge of antiquity and the early medieval period. This was a consequence of Fiamma's positive reception of the

[1] Modena: Biblioteca Estense, Estense lat. 45*, Johannis de Mussis Chronicon* Placentinum, p. 3. Also, see Musso chapter, footnote 20.

proto-humanism of Benzo d'Alessandria and Cermenate.[2] Like these historians, Fiamma studiously mined classical and early medieval source material to deepen his understanding of Milan and Italy's ancient past (indeed, Fiamma even acquired his copy of Livy from Cermenate).[3] As a consequence, Fiamma worked from a far richer image of Milan's early past, which could then be manipulated to fit certain archetypal categories. This was necessarily a difficult intellectual project, which – even for as gifted a historian as Fiamma – took several renderings of the same history to complete. The complexity of Fiamma's programme of archetypes thus reflects the more stimulating and resourceful intellectual environment of the Ambrosian metropolis.

We now transition to why only two of our historians – Morigia and Azario – use their texts to legitimate the autonomy of localities (with Morigia championing Monza as a privileged spiritual centre and Azario defending the privileged sovereignty of the *popularis status*). That Fiamma wrote on behalf of the Visconti regime explains his relative disinterest in defending the sovereign privileges of the Ambrosian City. More relevant to Fiamma was asserting the rights of the signoria over Milan, its contado, and the other cities of its territorial state. More surprising is that Musso was not interested in the theme of Piacenza's autonomy. This possibly reflects the weakness of the city's communitarian consciousness (on which, more later), with Musso accordingly subordinating the history of the *civitas* to privilege instead the feats of the city's aristocratic clans.

Finally, it is noteworthy that only Musso is interested in aristocratic lineages (beyond the Visconti) and that he alone frames the conflict between the *pars Ecclesiae*/*pars Imperii* as central feature of his narrative. Though Fiamma is also interested in the aristocracy, particularly in his *Galvagnana*, no one clan or collection of clans dominates the narrative of his text. The reason for this is probably to avoid detracting from the centrality of the Visconti, whose descent from Aeneas through the counts of Angleria, Lombard kings, and then dukes is instead intended to constitute the central thread of his narrative. By contrast, Morigia's disinterest in Monza's aristocracy –

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[2] On the proto-humanism of Benzo d'Alessandria, see J.R. Berrigan, "The prehumanism of Benzo d'Alessandria", *Traditio*, 25 (1969). For Cermenate's account of Milan's ancient past, see G. Cermenate, *Historia Iohannis de Cermenate*, edited by L.A. Ferrai (Roma, 1889), pp. 5-18.
[3] Fiamma acknowledges the loan of Livy from Cermenate in MF, p. 539.

absent a short passage on the noble families of Monza – is likely a function of his desire to privilege the experience of Monza and its church, rather than individual families.[4] So, too, we can easily comprehend Azario's disinterest in the aristocracy, given his focus on the *populares* and the *popularis status*.

Somewhat odder, however, is that, with the exception of Musso, no text places much attention on the conflict between Guelphs and Ghibellines. The parties are occasionally mentioned in Fiamma, but they do not play a central role in his histories. That this was a conscious choice is illustrated by the friar's decision to write them out of his appropriation of Cermenate's more Ghibelline-focused history.[5] This may be an extension of the fact that, by the late 1330s and 1340s, divisions between parties had become less important in the politics of the Ambrosian City.[6] In Morigia's history, the Guelphs and Ghibellines are mentioned in the context of a council meeting held in 1322, but are otherwise not important protagonists in the text (indeed, Morigia's narrative even attempts to conceal that the violence that subsumed Lombardy in the 1320s and 1330s was a war between Guelphs and Ghibellines, instead presenting it as a conflict between Lombards and foreigners). In Azario's history of Lombardy, on the other hand, the Guelphs and Ghibellines are mentioned as early as the history's prologue, with Azario informing us that the parties were born from the conflict between the empire and church, receiving their names from two demons, *Gibel* and *Gualef*.[7] Tellingly, however, Azario concludes that the most salient division was not between but within parties, observing that "we see that the Guelphs are worse among themselves than against the Ghibellines."[8] The reason that Azario de-privileges party conflict is related to this analysis: the notary was ultimately more concerned with internal divisions, particularly within the *popularis status*.

This brief survey should serve to explain a few reasons for the very different attitudes, rhetoric, and interests of our texts. We might add one final reason, which was that our historians were working within literary and oral traditions that had little overlap.

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[4] Bonincontro Morigia, *Chronicon Modoetiense*, *RIS*, 12 (Milan, 1728), p. 1124.
[5] See above, pp. 68-9.
[6] F. Somaini, "Il binomio imperfetto: alcune osservazioni su guelfi e ghibellini a Milano in età visconteo-sforzesca", in M. Gentile (ed.) *Guelfi e ghibellini nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2005), pp. 161-7.
[7] P. Azario, *Chronicon de Gestis Principium Vicecomitum*, in L.A. Muratori (ed.) *RIS*, 16 (Milano, 1730), p. 299.
[8] Azario, p. 299: vidimus peiores Guelfos inter se, quam contra Ghibellinos

The parochialism of each text is exemplified by the fact that, with the exception of Morigia, who read Fiamma, there is no evidence that any of our historians were reading each other. Absent intertextuality, it should be no surprise that the concerns of our historians remained separate.

The Territorial State and the *Civitas*

Although all our historians are responsive to the emergence of the territorial state, their concerns are ultimately factional and local (beyond even the unit of the *civitas*), to the extent that they share a weak conception of both the territorial state and the city itself. Somewhat of an exception is Morigia's *Chronicon Modoetiense,* which articulates a civic consciousness rooted in the people of Monza's shared fidelity toward the basilica of Saint John. Morigia offers this basilica to the territorial state as its Temple of Solomon – conceptualising it as a sacred space in which to anchor a regional Lombard identity. As we have pointed, however, this was ultimately a self-serving agenda, since Morigia's purpose was less to aggrandise the territorial state itself than to aggrandise Monza as its spiritual centre.

Our other historians were even less disposed to thinking about Lombardy as a political whole. But we should not accuse them of a failure of imagination. As has been observed by Jane Black, even the Visconti court was reluctant to treat its domain as a single political unit. Despite receiving a ducal investiture in 1396 that recognised the Visconti territories as a unified duchy, Gian Galeazzo and his successors preferred to refer to their state with less evocative terminology: *civitates et nostrae terrae*, *territorii dominii nostri*, and *territorium* et *dominium*.[9] This conservative nomenclature reflects a cautious mindset, shaped by the difficulties experienced by the regime as it nevertheless tried to consolidate the political order of its dominion. [10] But with the signoria unwilling to communicate a coherent identity for its state (even at the end of the Trecento), it should be no surprise that neither Azario nor even Fiamma should have imagined the

[9] J. Black, "The emergence of the duchy of Milan: language and the territorial state", in *Reti Medievali Rivista*, 14/1 (2013), pp. 5-6.
[10] One example is the political backlash that forced Gian Galeazzo to revoke a decree (passed in 1386) that had allowed the sale of immobile property between the various districts of his realm A. Gamberini, "Una città e la sua coscienza comunitaria: Reggio Emilia fra Trecento e Quattrocento", in *Oltre le città* (Roma, 2009), p. 95.

territorial state as something more than a collection of political communities that happened to share a common signoria (we will address Musso below).

Part of the problem was not just localism, but the absence of a salient regional or "national" consciousness – an absence that can be noticed as far back as the 9th-century history of Andreas of Bergamo and the 10th-century *Antapodosis* of Liutprand of Cremona (both produced during a period when there was a centralised court in northern Italy).[11] The rapid decentralisation of political power that marked the 11th century intensified this localism. By the time a regional state re-emerged under the Visconti signoria, the identity of Lombardy's elites had become irrevocably rooted in factions, parties, and the countryside. Consonant with this parochialism, our texts demur from offering a historical precedent for the territorial state. Despite that all of our historians were familiar with Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum*, for instance, the memory of the 8th-century Lombard kingdom is never used as an antecedent for the Visconti's Lombard dominion. So irrelevant was the memory of the Lombard *regnum* that even Bonincontro Morigia – who was sympathetic to the political ambitions of the territorial state – rejected it as a political model. When rewriting a passage from 2 Maccabees to describe the Visconti polity, Morigia saw it fit to change the original text's *regnum* to *consulatus* – a term more relevant to the *quasi-città*'s mental matrix.[12]

So, too, a possible model for thinking about the territorial state emerges inchoate in the Ghibellinism of Giovanni Musso. This anti-hierocratic and anti-clerical ideology is used to justify the philo-imperial rule of the Visconti, particularly when at war with the papacy. It does not, however, serve as the basis for a territorial identity that could unite the disparate cities and communities of northern Italy, notwithstanding that Musso hoped Gian Galeazzo might eventually become a *dominus naturalis* of Lombardy and Tuscany.

Equally noteworthy is the absence of a communitarian consciousness in our texts (with the exception, as noted, of Morigia's *Chronicon*).[13] Fiamma's histories describe Milan as divided between the *populus* and nobility, despairing in the *Chronicon Maius*

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[11] See C. Wickham, "Lawyer's Time: History and Memory in Tenth- and Eleventh-Century Italy", *in Land and Power: Studies in Italian and European Social History, 400-1200* (London, 1994), especially pp. 278-82.

[12] See above, pp. 106-08.

[13] On the subject, see Gamberini "Una città e la sua coscienza comunitaria ". For a juristic perspective, see M. Ryan, "Bartolus of Sassoferrato and Free Cities", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 10 (2000)

that his *civitas* was really not one but *duae civitates*.[14] An effort is made by his *Opusculum* to present the Visconti as the focal point of Milanese political unity. Even then, however, the Visconti's relationship with Milan is described as not with the city but with its individual parts: *totus populus et universi officiales et nobiles civitatis*.[15] Indeed, so factionalised were the Ambrosian city's political identities that the texts by Fiamma that carried the most pronounced factional narratives – the *Manipulus Florum* and *Galvagnana* – were the texts that enjoyed the greatest dissemination.[16]

In Azario's histories, too, a civic consciousness is hard to find. While the historian attempts to conflate the physical space of Novara with the factional-class identity of its *populares*, he ultimately acknowledges that the city was a shared space contested between the *populus* and nobility, the Guelphs and Ghibellines (to a lesser extent), and powerful clans. In the mental framework of Giovanni Musso, the city as a political ideal carries even less weight. Instead, it is the (local) *pars Imperatoris* that lies at the centre of the historian's political identity.

This diversity of identity, ultimately rooted in the local experiences of our historians, reflects one reason why the Visconti territorial state never achieved the political unity enjoyed by European monarchies north of the Alps (particularly in England and France). Despite that the state developed an efficient and effective bureaucratic apparatus (one of the finest in Europe), a legacy of political fragmentation left it unable to overcome intensely local identities. [17] Our historians testify to these identities' resilience, as well as their flexibility, as they were deftly adapted to accommodate the rise of the territorial state.

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[14] CM, p. 752.
[15] *Opusculum*, p. 34.
[16] See above, pp. 93-4.
[17] Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo: Linguaggi politici e dinamiche constituzionali* (Milano, 2005), pp. 40-59.

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