Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Bibliotheken und Archiven

Bd. 65

1985

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The popolo minuto had never consented to (Ghibellines) being made Guelphs¹).

The chronicle of the so-called Squittinatore or scrutinizer of Florence is remarkable by any standards. One of the eleven contemporaries who described the insurrections of the popolo minuto during the summer of 1378, its author actually praised revolutionaries. He enthusiastically told the story of the disturbances that brought the famous Michele di Landò to power on July 22 of that year and he then transformed into martyrs those radical woolworkers who vainly challenged Michele on August 31. How remarkable that such a document should have been written, let alone survive, in a world that thought of poor workers as those who had once killed Christ²). It was unavoidable that this unusual if authoritative document would remain

¹) G. Scaramella (ed.), Il tumulto dei Ciompi. Cronache e memorie (Bologna, 1934), p. 87. I want to thank Chiara Bietoletti, John Najemy, and Stefano Rosso for their help in interpreting this chronicle.

sacrosanct, a source of wonder rather than the subject of close study. The present article undertakes such an examination. We should know more about the author and about the multiple political and social allegiances he and his kind swore to.

The Revolts

The traditional view of "the tumult of the Ciompi", as it is commonly called in Italian, itself assured that the chronicle of the Squittinatore would remain unstudied. According to modern accounts of these uprisings of the city's textile workers, there was one revolt, one series of inexorable convulsions that began in July after the patriciate of Florence had destabilized the city by fighting among themselves in June. In the traditional conservative historiography, those forty days and nights stretching from July 22 through August 31 were one great Christ-like Passion. Superior to his own class, Michele di Lando may have come to power as a ciombo, but by then resisting his fellows in August he had preserved Florentine civiltà. On the five hundredth anniversary of the revolts a group of working-class Florentines pressed the mayor of Florence to name a street after Michele, whom they obviously considered a working-class hero. The mayor agreed to do so, but he pointed out to the delegation that while they wanted the street because Michele had led the workers, he went along because Michele had defeated the Ciompi. The events of August consumed July, so to speak.

This socially static view of July and August 1378 continues today. Our knowledge of events seems secure, so much so that the sexcentennial commemoration managed to have only two of its papers on the revolt itself, one of which was unoriginal. Despite the

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3) The comparisons to Christ's passion began at the time; Scaramella, pp. 57f., where the "Ghibelline" regime after the summer is said by a "Guelph" to have lasted 40 months. Modern documentary study of the revolts started with N. Rodolico, La democrazia fiorentina nel suo tramonto, 1378–1382 (Bologna, 1905).

important contributions to the subject by Gene Brucker, the Ciompi has historiographical rigor mortis\(^5\).

In recent articles I have reexamined the events of the summer, and the results have been surprising. In effect, the revolts of July and August were quite distinct, each having a special geographical, occupational, and institutional character\(^6\). Following the patrician fracas in June, a great uprising occurred on July 20 that ended two days later when Michele di Lando entered an empty city hall. This revolution unfolded under the high communal Standard of Justice, which had been pilfered from its rightful place on the 20th; it ended with the same banner being restored to the civic Palace by Michele di Lando. The leaders of this July uprising were, I found, minor gildsmen and not the \textit{popolo minuto}, that is, the unincorporated workers and small merchants of the city. Even Michele di Lando himself, though in fact a wool shop foreman, was matriculated in the minor gild of the pork butchers well before the revolution. Just as important, it transpires that all of the leaders of this successful revolution were Citrarnans or from the north side of the river where stand the civic monuments, and not Oltrarnans. Oltrarnans on the other hand plotted the abortive August uprising: most of them were in fact members of the \textit{popolo minuto} and predominantly wool workers from the southwestern neighborhood called Camaldoli. They had, it is true, begun the uprising of July, but quickly withdrew to their quarter before the tumult became a revolution. These Ciompi, as the Camaldolans called themselves, waited until late August. Then they rose up against the government of Michele di Lando, but failed.

With this reading of the troubles of summer 1378, the chronicle

\(^5\) R. Barducci's study of the financial reforms of the summer is the original contribution on the revolt itself; there are of course significant chapters on matters other than the events; Il tumulto dei Ciompi. Un momento di storia fiorentina ed europea (Florence, 1981). For Brucker, see especially his "The Ciompi Revolution", in N. Rubinstein (ed.), Florentine Studies (Florence, 1968), pp. 314–356.

of the Squittinatore may be examined as something other than a unique product of one revolution without process.

The Document

Gino Scaramella's critical edition is based on two non-autograph manuscripts. The older one was written about the end of the fourteenth century and the younger one in the following century; Scaramella used the latter to fill internal lacunae in and to control the former\(^7\). The old manuscript has contemporary foliation that begins with the number 16. Since the younger scribe copied the older manuscript, almost half of both copies is, therefore, missing, though how much is missing from the chronicle itself is unclear. Suffice it to say that the extant work begins with a list of those Florentines knighted on July 20 and then continues with subsequent events. There is, therefore, no account of the June events or the beginning of the July troubles in the fragment that remains.

The extant document consists of four blocks of records covering the period from July 20 until late 1387, with substantial breaks\(^8\). The first and most important section beginning on July 20 continues without interruption until June 1379. Scaramella was certainly right that despite the subsequent breaks, the whole record is the work of one man\(^9\); his view that the first block of information was recorded on a day-to-day basis is, however, certainly wrong\(^10\). Alessandro Gherardi had already noted that the author spread out the late August events over too many days, and my examination shows that at two points in September, the author misdated events by exactly one

\(^7\) Scaramella, pp. 69—72; the edition occupies pp. 73—102 of this volume.
\(^8\) The missing periods are June 1379—Mar. 1380; Apr. 1380—Apr. 1381; Nov. 1382—Oct. 1384; Nov. 1384—Mar. 1385; Dec. 1385—Jan. 1387. See Scaramella's introduction to this chronicle for his thesis on the structuring of the later part of the work; since we concentrate on the earlier section, that problem need not detain us.
\(^9\) Scaramella, p. 70.
\(^10\) Ibid.
week\textsuperscript{11}). Evidently the writer reconstructed his account of the summer, probably in late September or early October of 1378, as we shall see. The account of the forty summer days lacks all the signs of presentism found at later points of the work, such as “I don’t know what will happen”, “thank God”, and so forth\textsuperscript{12}). Scaramella based his view on the fact that the author changed his attitude toward Michele di Lando. As I hope to demonstrate, the writer rather constructed a tragic history of betrayal.

The Author

No one has ever doubted that the author was a Florentine, for he refers at different points to “our” city, dominion, \textit{contado}, and fortresses, and speaks of the Sienese sending “us” an embassy\textsuperscript{13}). The author’s residence, on the other hand, has elicited no comment one way or the other, though it is easy to determine near the beginning of the account. His tale of the July revolution finished, the author lists those members of the new revolutionary government whose identity he knew. The Florentine executive had 37 members, beginning with the Standard Bearer of Justice Michele di Lando, whom the author lists\textsuperscript{14}). Then came eight priors, two from each of Florence’s four quarters. The writer did not know the names of one prior from the quarter of S. Giovanni and another from the quarter of S. Maria Novella; that is, he knew all four priors from the Citrarno quarter of

\textsuperscript{11}) The date of the execution of two of the Ciompi’s Eight Saints was Sept. 5, 1378, not the 12th, and the judicial condemnations of Sept. are a week too late as well; Scaramella, p. 83; Trexler, Neighbours. Gherardi commented as editor of the Diario d’anonimo fiorentino dall’anno 1358 al 1389, in Cronache dei secoli XIII e XIV (Florence, 1876), p. 377, n. 3.

\textsuperscript{12}) As found in later, contemporary, entries. The one exception is the author’s wish that the scrutiny of Aug. 1378 would remain in force; Scaramella, p. 78. But this invocation was in order, for the scrutiny was still in force when he wrote the section.

\textsuperscript{13}) Ibid., pp. 86, 94, 97f., etc.

\textsuperscript{14}) The list is ibid., p. 76. Biographies of the priors and standard bearers of the wards are in my “Neighbours”, tables IV and V.
S. Croce and from the single Oltrarno quarter of S. Niccolò. The sixteen standard bearers of the wards of Florence followed, four from each quarter. Whereas he had known both priors from Oltrarno S. Spirito, the author knew only one of its four standard bearers, and the same is true for the quarters of S. Maria Novella and S. Giovanni. But he knew three of the four gonfalonieri of S. Croce, just as he had known both its priors. The evidence that the writer was from this quarter is then all but definitively established by what little he knew about the twelve buonuomini, the last college of the communal executive. The only three he knew were the three from S. Croce. I shall present further evidence for my location of the author in S. Croce, but the above data is persuasive on its own. Our author lived in the quarter, indeed as we shall see the ward, in which were the Palace of the Signoria, their great square, and the judicial palaces, including that of the podestà.

Previous students have silently but correctly assumed that the writer was a layman; while there are many clerical traits in this chronicle, the author's ignorance of ecclesiastical specifics, for example the name of a visiting cardinal, makes it improbable that he was a clergyman. Yet, he says nothing direct about his occupation, and therefore students have concentrated on those two points in the chronicle where the author refers to himself to get some idea of what type of life he pursued. Let us review their conclusions.

The first time the author mentioned himself was on August 21, 1378. After the establishment of the revolutionary government on July 22, it decided upon a general scrutiny for the high communal offices, one whereby those members of the popolo minuto who had now been incorporated into three new gilds, and who paid taxes,

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15) Gherardi gives the “authentic” list of buonuomini in Diario, p. 370, n. 2. Our author normally listed “those I know”, Scaramella, p. 84. He left blank space where he did not know people. The author actually listed four names of standard bearers for S. Croce, but repeated one: he included the wards of Bue, Carro, and Leon Nero, and omitted Ruote.

16) “Un cardinale” preached to “us” and told “us” who the true pope was; Scaramella, p. 92. Yet note the two accounts of miracles; ibid., pp. 78, 98.

17) The date is from Diario, p. 375; Scaramella, p. 78.
could be made eligible for future office). Our author could not remember the date the scrutiny started, but he did remember important details about its course. The whole process had taken place in the Palace or city hall, while the four quarters' newly-established companies of crossbowmen (balestrieri) guarded the square, the guard being changed every two days among the quarters. When the scrutiny was finished, the government fetched friars who sang the Te Deum while the communal musicians played, church bells tolled, and everyone thanked God. The author continues:

This then having been done, everyone sat down, and each person treated himself to a sweet called zuccata, and then each drank. While the whole scrutiny (committee) sat, I saw this and tasted this.

Based on this text, G. O. Corazzini was confident, perhaps too confident, that the writer had to have been one of the 220 politicians said by our author to have run the scrutiny. But why, one can ask. Clergymen were certainly present, for they historically played important roles in these central electoral processes. And why not notaries, obviously there to preserve the record? Why, finally, not the military guard, which could have been present inside as well as outside?

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18) S. Croce was the first quarter scrutinized, followed by S. Spirito, S. Giovanni, and S. Maria Novella; ibid., p. 116. Brucker, Ciompi, pp. 336f. unearthed the fact only those in the tax lists were eligible for office.

19) Scaramella, p. 77; see further below.

20) E' vid’io e assagia’ di ciò, sedendo tutto lo scuittino a sedere, ibid., p. 78. I disregarded the alternate reading “I had sat through the whole scrutiny” for grammatical reasons, and thus accepted the unusual use of the word “scrutinio” as referring to the committee rather than the process.


Corazzini had to confront this last possibility because the thesis that the author was a soldier had already been put forward by Carlo Fossati on the basis of the second occasion on which the author referred to himself. It was September 1, the day after the defeat of the Ciompi. The largest of the three revolutionary gilds established only a month earlier contained the wool carders and combers who had led the August insurrection; the crowd in the Piazza that day disbanded that massive gild of workers by plebiscite. Then came the disgrace of the Ciompi members of the government. Two such persons had entered office that very morning as part of the traditional bimonthly change of the executive, but the crowd now insisted that they depart from city hall and be replaced by citizens from two of the remaining 23 legal gilds. “All for the best”, our author says, the two men decided to leave the Palace ...

in great fear, for a great villainy could have been done them. However it pleased God for them to escape, (if) in great fear. And two pairs of the soldiers of the Signori were given them as accompaniment; they were to accompany them wherever they wanted to go. One went one way, one another. The (ex-) Standard Bearer of Justice fell to me, and I put my hand under his arm and thus led him to my house, (where we stayed) until the furor had died down. After we had eaten, both I and his other friends accompanied him. And he went away to a villa (outside the city). I don’t know what route the other (prior) took.

Fossati faultlessly argued that the writer was, therefore, one of the priors’ soldiers. This view has generally prevailed, but Coraz-

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23) *Fu dato loro compagnia due coppe di fanti di signori, che gli accompagnavano e’ volessero. Chi tenne in qua e chi in là. A me capitò il confaloniere della giostizia, ed io gli messi la mano sotto il braccio, e si lo menai a casa mia, tanto che quello furore fu cessato via. Quando avemmo mangiato, e io e altri suoi amici sì l’accompagnammo, ed e’ se n’andò in villa. L’altro non so che vie tenne*, Scaramella, p. 83. One might think that since the Standard Bearer stood for the quarter of S. Spirito, his amico would have come from that area, but that is the thinner a supposition because it is not certain that he actually lived Oltrarno. Cf. Scaramella, p. 121, where the priors were sent home molto alla cortese to be sure they were not attacked.

24) C. Fossati, Il tumulto dei Ciompi, Pubblicazioni del R. istituto di studi
zini's objections to it should be considered. This author argued that it was implausible that the politician of the scrutiny was also a prioral soldier, and he was right: none of the familiars paid by the government of Michele di Lando is likely to have been a scrutiner\textsuperscript{25}). Second, Corazzini thought it impossible that "in the robes of a soldier of the Signori was hidden a chronicler", given the quality of these soldiers\textsuperscript{26}). There he was mislead, for among that group, as loosely defined, were some who certainly could write\textsuperscript{27}). Finally, Corazzini pointed to the writer's statement that he was a friend of the disgraced Standard Bearer, the wool comber Bartolo di Jacopo called Baroccio, and in Corazzini's mind that declared friendship excluded a mere fante. In summary, Corazzini decided that the author's statement that a pair of fanti accompanied Baroccio had nothing to do with the self-reference of the author\textsuperscript{28}). Obviously, the presence of two fanti did not preclude a friend stepping forward.

In the narrow sense, Corazzini was almost certainly on the mark: the author did not mean to say that he was one of the hired bodyguards of the priors. Yet Corazzini did not take the matter one step further and ask who then would have stepped forward and essentially guaranteed by his presence Baroccio's safe passage. We can be sure, I think, that this person was either a well-known politician from among the 220 who had done the scrutiny, or a notary who had been at the scrutiny either as syndic for his gild or as a scribe, and who at this later moment had enough authority to dissuade an angry

\textsuperscript{25}) Those paid are in Archivio di Stato, Firenze (ASF), Deliberazioni dei Signori e Collegi, ordinaria autorità, ff. 1r–57v. Few seem to be Florentines, and only a rare one has a Florentine name (see n. 27). I doubt that a fante dei signori could legally be involved.

\textsuperscript{26}) Corazzini, p. xxv.

\textsuperscript{27}) Thus Borso Spinelli, son of the prior Spinello, a merchant, probably did. But his status in the Palace was special; see his biography in my "Neighbours", table II, n. 8.

\textsuperscript{28}) Corazzini, p. xxvi. The author may have said he was a friend of Baroccio only because, by aiding him, he had demonstrated what was called friendship; see Trexler, Public Life. pp. 136 and seq.
crowd from attacking the disgraced official\textsuperscript{29}). Next, we must hypothesize that this person, while a friend of the ex-Standard Bearer, was not a declared enemy of the regime that had just triumphed over the Ciompi. Finally, there is one thing we may be sure of. The author of this chronicle was flexible. He supported the regime of Michele di Landò, was in Florence during the regime in power from September 1 till January 1382, and he welcomed the return of the Guelphs and the subsequent regime at this later point. Who was this inside-outsider? His name was ser Bernardo di ser Taddeo Carcherelli, who lived in the quarter of S. Croce, in the ward of the Cow\textsuperscript{30}). I think he is the author of the chronicle of the Squittinatore.

The Writer

The author of this chronicle narrates the summer and early fall events as if orating to a group, whose members will hear the account\textsuperscript{31}). It proceeds within a literary format of betrayal, one more likely the property of a notary than of a merchant or worker. First the author sets up a mood of exaltation surrounding the July events. The hero is the wool burler Betto di Ciardo, from the quarter of S. Giovanni and parish of S. Jacopo in Campo Corbolino; Betto is mentioned three times by our author, but nowhere else in the voluminous accounts of the period. Betto first appears on the evening of July 20. Apparently having seized the pilfered Standard of Justice when it fell

\textsuperscript{29}) All students of the chronicler recognize he was privy at times to detailed information from the top and bottom of the social ladder; see Corazzini, pp. xxv–xxx for references; Rodolico, pp. 210ff.; below, n. 85. Note the author's specific information on two subsequent scrutinies; Scaramella, pp. 91, 99.

\textsuperscript{30}) The family names Carchelli and Carcherelli are apparently interchangeable; the family was old, a ser Bartolo die Bernardo de Carchellis notarizing the butchers' statutes in 1318. On Bernardo's brother Giusto, also a notary, see the biographies in my “Neighbours”, table IV, n. 24. For his son Taddeo (d. 1417) and grandsons Bernardo and Francesco, see ASF, Catasto, 30, ff. 131r–132v (1427).

\textsuperscript{31}) “As you will hear”, etc.; Scaramella, pp. 87, 89ff., 95.
from the hands of a wounded armourer earlier in the day\textsuperscript{32}), this wool worker leads the crowd first across the river Oltrarno, then back to Citrarno and up into his own neighborhood, where it overnights. This “brave and courageous youth” was to the author’s singular liking, for Betto was the only Florentine in the whole chronicle whose actions were singled out for praise. On July 21 the crowd moved from Betto’s neighborhood against the palace of the \textit{podestà} in the Carcherelli district, and our author gives a detailed description of that palace’s siege and fall: relatively bloodless, our author says, because “the podestà’s neighbours” intervened. The following morning the author has the crowd leave that palace and march into the great Piazza of the Signoria crying “Long Live the Popolo Minuto!” Our author makes a point to tell us that the crowd was still led by the standard bearer Betto di Ciardo. At this crucial moment, the writer has a hapless Michele di Landò appear in the square: unlike the \textit{franco} Betto, Michele bore no arms at all, and his mother, the writer tells us, was a mere huckster at the town prison. The author seems to want us to picture nobility giving the flag over to meanness, to a man who, as the plot unfolds, betrays the revolution entrusted to him.

That moment arrives soon enough, and the author now tells his readers of a vast conspiracy. Bribed by the \textit{popolo grasso}, as the author disparagingly calls the “fat cats” of the major political gilds, Michele in turn wins over the other lower-class priors by promising them that they will be exempt from the coming purge. Till the very end the \textit{popolo minuto} will find it hard to believe that Michele and his colleagues had betrayed them:

They did not believe that they would be betrayed by those who were the signori by their hands. After all, three (of the nine)

\textsuperscript{32} How Betto got the flag is in my “Follow the Flag” (cf. n. 6). Documentary references to Betto have been found, however, and I have also hypothesized he was the son of the important July leader, the wine merchant Ciardo di Berto, “Neighbours”, table II, n. 16. A Bettino di Ciardo, wool carder, was scrutinized in the Ruote ward of S. Croce in August 1378 and could be our Betto if his tax home was different from his residence; ASF, Tratte, 58, f. 21r. The scrutiny list for Leon d’Oro, the ward of Campo Corbolino, has not survived. For the following events, see Scaramella, pp. 74f.
were their priors. Thus they did not believe that they would be betrayed by them. They were the corporals and factors of this state, and yet they were all part of the conspiracy\(^{33}\).

After this point, the author again attaches the epithet “the traitor” when Michele appears in the chronicle\(^{34}\).

Since this section of the chronicle was composed in the fall, it is all the more evident that its emotional movement from enthusiasm to rancor and from confidence to betrayal was clearly the work of a literary craftsman, if one of limited ability. Actual events were slightly less dramatic. The author for example makes it sound as if in late August the *minuti* acted in self-defense, whereas our other sources assert that Michele di Lando’s conspiracy was precipitated by a prior conspiracy of the Ciompi. The author would also have us believe that no one recognized the malevolence of the government till the very end, but in fact, its antagonism to the interest of the propertyless *minuti* and even to those with taxes to pay was clear almost from the beginning\(^{35}\). That is especially true of the Camaldolans, who played no corporate part in the seizure of power anyway, and in my view quickly saw the July revolution as opposed to their interests. Our author’s tale might explain his gullibility and perhaps that of other Citrarnans, but not all the supporters of the Ciompi were taken in.

A second literary feature of this work is that its author composes many speeches for dramatic purposes. Certainly the work of a person acquainted with literary forms, these quotes are found in accounts of private conversations and governmental deliberations, but those put into the mouths of conspirators about to be executed are especially significant. The witness he paid to the death scene of

\(^{33}\) Ibid., p. 81. The author means the rich major gildsmen when he says *popolo grasso*; ibid., pp. 83, 87. Earlier on the author laid the groundwork by showing how the revolutionaries fulfilled their promises, and how each prior publicly swore to support them; ibid., pp. 73, 76.

\(^{34}\) Ibid., pp. 82, 90.

\(^{35}\) The author himself said that many citizens were unhappy with the results of the scrutiny, and that they pointed out to the *minuti* that they had come up with “empty spoons”, ibid., p. 79. See my “Neighbours” on how early this reckoning came.
two of those who had led the August insurrection (the "Eight Saints") is typical. First, the author says the authorities had trouble finding a judge who would order the hanging "because (they) thought (the execution) would be unreasonable"; the Crucifixion was no stranger to the writer's imagination. A judge having been found by "certain citizens" and the moment for the last words having come, the two made their speech to the crowd in the Piazza della Signoria, and our author records it as would a notary: "God knows that our execution is a great wrong. But we die content if our death will help mend the city." The author continues: "They fell silent, and the injustice was done. It appeared very bad to many people."

Here as elsewhere the author strains credibility. The two men in question (only one of whom the author knew by name) were after all central figures in a frontal challenge to the government, and yet he found them innocent. These and other victims in this chronicle were not martyrs who lived up to their actions against a hated regime and offered their lives, but complete innocents. On being executed in October, one Niccolò the Porkbutcher gave a long speech in which he brought down on himself thousands of deamons if he was actually guilty of the accusations, yet he called himself a martyr of God who would die content in the knowledge of his innocence if only bystanders would pray for his soul. Thus the underlying emphasis is not on the just cause but on the injustice of the judges or someone else. Sometimes the judges are found at fault in their judicial procedure, at other times they err by accepting the words or advice of others. In one such case the "evil man" Tommaso Strozzi talked Michele di Landò into acting unjustly. Then in narrating the Good Friday plot of 1379 the writer shows how one Lapolino falsely denounced three of his shop colleagues to the authorities, who were taken in. He quotes

36) Scaramella, p. 84.
37) Ibid. These executions seemed "bad to many people".
38) Ibid., pp. 84f. The martyr's name is in Diario, p. 386. On the concern of contemporaries that the condemned die without anger toward their executioners, see Trexler, Public Life, p. 202.
39) A case of a sentence before a trial is in Scaramella, p. 84. For praise of one judicial official, see Scaramella, p. 92.
40) Ibid., p. 80.
their protestations of innocence, and would later welcome the murder of Lapolino by youthful avengers “because he had wrongly brought on the death of many of his colleagues”\(^{41}\). At still other times the author just asserts that persons whose cases he may well not have known, like two workers of the town of Poggibonsi, had been hung “without guilt or reason”: “Oh God! Why are we to be hung? We have never been thieves nor traitors nor assassins. God have mercy on us\(^{42}\)!"

Thus the author’s dramatic sympathy covered those who were caught in the dragnet of justice allegedly without cause and those who had evidently been involved in opposition to the regime of Michele and his successors. In fact, the writer seems not to have considered political crimes to have merited death, and the predominant objects of his outrage were the regime itself and the unjust foreign judicial officials it hired. But to the point: here was a man who either visited executions regularly or felt called upon to record the public testimony of those about to be executed. He felt it necessary in effect to express his opinion on the justice of executions, as would a member of the gild of judges and notaries\(^{43}\).

The Politician

The Squittinatore has two central political messages. The first of these was a deeply-held view that as long as “the poor” were victimized, the city would not be unified or “mended”. This sentiment first emerged the night of July 21 at the palace of the podestà in his dramatic description of a type of utopic micro-city standing at ease. “Many people were there”, he says admiringly and repeatedly, “rich and poor, each to guard the flag of his gild”\(^{44}\). The scrutiny after the revolution was as admirable because through the absorption of the

\(^{41}\) Ibid., pp. 92f., 95.
\(^{42}\) Ibid., p. 89; further p. 93.
\(^{43}\) Possibly the writer was also a member of the Florentine confraternity of the Tempio, charged with accompanying the condemned to their deaths, Trexler, Public Life, pp. 197–213.
\(^{44}\) Scaramella, p. 75.
popolo minuto into the political system "poor and rich", "everyone, would be content"\(^{45}\). So many Ciompi followed their leaders in their misguided actions in August, the author implies, because the latter assured them that the petition they were forwarding to the government contained "all (things) good for the rich and the poor"\(^{46}\). The crowd and perhaps the writer himself had bought the assurance and did not demand details. The detested popolo grasso or "fat cats" of the major commercial gilds were those who stood in the way of the amity the author sought. Yet even if he bitterly noted that "because they were patricians and of good families" such gildsmen were not likely to be tortured when they were suspect of conspiracy, our author always envisioned a commune that left the rich privileged, and property rights protected\(^{47}\).

But who were these "poor" our writer so often evoked? Repeatedly he characterizes not physical hardships but political liabilities: "the poor" paid taxes and got nothing for it. Nowhere does he refer to the indigents who paid no taxes, nowhere does he protest the revolutionary decision to exclude non-taxpayers from the scrutiny and from office, nowhere does he mention the terrible lack of food in Florence in August. Instead he commiserated with those who received no political offices and who had to pay actual taxes rather than loans that earned interest\(^{48}\). Such a stance came naturally to a notary. Members of clerical corporations have historically distanced themselves from the grimy acquisitiveness of the grassi, and Florentine notaries had the specific disadvantage of being cus-

\(^{45}\) Ibid., p. 78.
\(^{46}\) Ibid., p. 79.
\(^{47}\) Ibid., p. 85. Characteristically, the author was glad that the crowd decided on a revolutionary struggle the night of July 20–21, forced on it, according to him, because rain prevented the popolo from the sacking and burning of private properties it had in mind. He thanked God, ibid., p. 75.
\(^{48}\) Perché ciascuno avesse parte degli uffici; e perché fossero uniti insieme i cittadini; e che il povero avesse la sua parte, come gli toccasse; però che sempre hanno portato la spesa, e non ebbero mai nuovo guadagno se non e ricchi, ibid., pp. 76f. and 78, in the same vein. Thus the revolution enlarged the extant political system: the author said the July revolution increased the status of the minor gilds from 14 in number to 17, even if he knew that offices would now be distributed between the major, minor, and the new minuti gilds, ibid., p. 77.
tomarily excluded from high political offices that were monopolized by the grassi. Lauro Martines has shown that while notaries might have been the lubricant that made the republic run, in the period from 1348 till 1378 only nine notaries held any of the 1674 available Signorial positions\(^49\). The revolution of 1378 did not change that situation. Still, it is clear that a notary would have shared the rancor of honest, even substantial, taxpayers who paid taxes but got no honor in return.

The second political stance of our author is his attitude toward Ghibellinism and Guelphism. In Florence, one had to be Guelph to participate in politics; to be officially labelled a Ghibelline was to lose one's political rights. In contemporary Florentine politics a Guelph was usually someone loyal to the church, and those who had backed the recent war with Rome were called "Ghibellines" by their enemies\(^50\). But practically, a Guelph was a person who approved of the policies of the aristocratic Florentine club called the Parte Guelfa, and a Ghibelline was someone who crossed the Parte and was then denounced as such by these ideological watchdogs. It was this group's attempt to subvert the authority of the war government that had led to the fracas in June: the government struck back and expelled many of the Parte leaders, thus letting loose the forces that would contend in July and August.

To understand the context of our author's views on this subject, one must first know that the Parte members expelled in June labelled the government of Michele di Landò "Ghibelline" and that those who joined these Guelfs in exile in September used the same label for the regime in power from then until early 1382\(^51\). Second, one must know and correctly assess the fact that after September these Guelph exiles associated and conspired with scores of fleeing Ciompi, and that when the Guelphs returned in early 1382 they brought many of

\(^49\) L. Martines, Lawyers and Statecraft in Renaissance Florence (Princeton, 1968), pp. 49f.
\(^51\) See e.g. the chronicle of ser Nofri di ser Piero, in Scaramella, p. 55 and seq.
the Ciompi with them. Now historians assume that this cooperation was a marriage of convenience that began on September 1. Stated differently, they usually assume that in the summer of 1378 everyone, *minuti, minori, and maggiori*, had the Parte as a common enemy. Our author shows a different reality. In effect, he spoke for many Florentines, “poor and rich”, who were *guelfissimi*. These people saw the enemy not as the aristocrats, but in the exploitative merchants and industrialists, the *grassi*. Some Ciompi as well as our author were linked to the Guelphs in the summer of 1378.

No historian has ever commented on our author's Guelphism, but it is consistent if cautious. We see it at three levels: in his general praise of Guelphism and in the complete absence of any criticism of the Parte, in his denunciation of the “Ghibelline” politics of the regime from late 1378 till 1382, and in his striking attention to the Guelph family of the Da Panzano.

The author has general approbation of all things Guelph. Thus he ends his narration of the August scrutiny of 1378 with the words: “Let it be and always be for the good state of the noble city, and of the Parte Guelfa.” The linkage of the city's nobility with the institution of the Parte is a typical Guelph flourish, yet its invocation at this point in Florentine history is a particular signal to the reader: the established gildsmen were still crowing about their recent humiliation of the Parte, and such demonstrative Guelphism is rarely enough

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52) G. Brucker points out that these alliances were not unusual in Florentine History, The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence (Princeton, 1977), pp. 64f. He does not however suggest this one started before Sept. 1. A petition *pro populo minuto* of July 21 (ASF, Provvisioni, 67, ff. 9r–13v) demanding the disciplining of Guelphs might seem to argue against my point of view; in fact, most of the law was a repetition of June decrees, now repeated doubtless at the behest of gildsmen who, while syndics of the *popolo minuto*, were actually established gildsmen; see further my “Neighbours”. In the 1380s one could of course defame the minor gilds by calling them *ciompi*, and then equate “*ciompi* and Ghibellines”; see ser Nofri in Scaramella, p. 63. But such equations were not used at the time of the unrest.

53) All emphasis has instead been on his lower class sympathies. Is it possible that the presumed earlier section of the chronicle is missing because of the author's attitude toward the Guelph crackdown in June?
encountered in the other chronicles, safe as such invocations were\(^{54}\). On the other hand, the writer was not what contemporaries called an archguelph or violent protagonist for his cause. He was circumspect, and he was realistic. Thus while he did not doubt that those whom the Parte had exiled before June were in fact Ghibellines as the Parte claimed—a view no other chronicler shared—, he grudgingly went along with their repatriation later in the summer because such repatriation was necessary to civil peace\(^{55}\). His suspicion remained.

The government’s pro-Ghibelline politics drew the author’s particular ire, especially after September 1. When in October the government changed the status of the ancient Ghibelline family of the Asini, neighbors of the Carcherelli, to Guelph, the chronicler was incensed, and he drew upon his knowledge of history to announce his open dissatisfaction with the regime:

They had been Ghibellines forever. The *popolo (minuto)* had never wanted to consent to their being made Guelph! For when the Emperor Henry (of Luxemburg in 1311) came to (the monastery of) S. Salvi with the backing of the Ghibellines, (the Asini) carried much of his baggage on their asses. Because of this they were called ‘the asinine enemies of the Parte Guelfa’. Now they’ve been made Guelph! And they will have offices like the Guelphs! When will God have enough of these Ghibellines who rule us\(^{56}\)!

Like the good notary who had to work with everyone, our author concealed a lot, but not at this turn of events. Vouching for the Guelphism of the defeated *popolo minuto*, he also hinted again at his resentment that while he as a notary had little chance of political office, these notorious Ghibelline bankers would now have such emoluments. In 1379 he bitingly reports on a Florentine embassy

\(^{54}\) Scaramella, p. 78. Note however the author’s seeming criticism of a judicial condemnation of someone for crying just that, Scaramella, p. 95.

\(^{55}\) *Poi ciascuno di questi ristuiti, ch’erano ghibellini* (for they were Ghibellines), *volle il popolo (minuto) che giurasse ciascuno di non essere contro a parte guelfa*, ibid., p. 76. The author implies therefore that the *popolo minuto* forced this issue on the *grassi*.

\(^{56}\) Ibid., p. 87.
sent to the Guelph king of Hungary to tell him that Florence "was governed by the 'Parte Ghibellina'—which of course was not said\(^{57}\)). He relished the regime's fear of the exiled twelve "noble men of great potency, and Guelphs" who plotted against that regime in Siena in 1379 and 1380, and he leaves little doubt that he favored the conspiracy\(^{58}\)). Thus when in early 1382 this regime began to collapse, his enthusiasm increased. The author told how the "evil men" Giorgio Scali and implicitly, Tommaso Strozzi, persons "who sought evilly to turn the city upside down every day", had brought on their own ruin, how "sage Guelphmen who loved their city" had executed one man, how Scali was executed "at the will of the whole popolo", and how then everyone started crying: "Long Live the Parte Guelfa!" This, the author triumphantly noted, meant "the beginning of the resuscitation of the Parte Guelfa"\(^{59}\)). Until the end, the chronicler's hatred of Ghibellinism and his love of the gentiluomini associated with Guelphism remained salient characteristics of his work\(^{60}\).

The aristocratic sympathies of this supporter of the Ciompi are manifest, but this symbiosis begins to make sense when we examine the author's close relation to the Da Panzano family, an ancient Guelph clan two of whose members conspired with the Ciompi in August. Just as the figure of the flagbearer Betto di Ciardo knits together the author's account of the July and August events, so the writer's unmistakable attention to these anti-bourgeois feudal landholders binds the August account to the exile history that follows. The family's ancestral home was the villa of Panzano in the Florentine countryside, while in the city its name was historically associated

\(^{57}\) *Come la città di Firenze si reggeva a parte ghibellina*, ibid., p. 92. Cf. *Diario*, p. 393.

\(^{58}\) *Si entrarono nella detta compagnia* (of Italian mercenaries at Siena) xii cittadini isbanditi, di maggiori della città di Firenze; i quali eron nobili uomini e di gran fare e guelfi; onde ciascuno' cittadino della città di Firenze, cioè coloro che reggevano, avevano gran paura. He added that they were even more afraid of internal opposition, *Scaramella*, pp. 93f.

\(^{59}\) Ibid., p. 96. The author does not mention Tommaso Strozzi by name, but his readers would have known he was being referred to; see the quote from ser Nofri below, at n. 87, and *Scaramella*, p. 96.

\(^{60}\) Positive references to *gentiluomini*, and to those exiled in 1382 as Ghibelines: ibid., pp. 97ff.
with the parish of S. Niccolò Oltrarno. But before and after the summer of 1378, the Da Panzano we shall mention paid taxes and presumably lived in the ward of Carro, quarter of S. Croce, close to the notary Carcherelli\(^{61}\).

Luca di Totto Da Panzano and his nephew Tommasino di Antonio first enter the author's account on the dramatic day of August 28. As we know from other sources, Luca along with several wool workers had been a founding member of the conspiracy of the Ciompi, that started at the Canto della Cuculia in Oltrarno Camaldoli about August 25\(^{62}\). On the 28th a great mass of Ciompi crossed to Citrarno and marched up to the Piazza San Marco. After deliberations, they then paraded down to the Piazza della Signoria, where they handed messer Luca a petition to be presented to the Signoria. This petition aimed at breaking the power of the grassi who were by then, the author says, themselves conspiring with Michele di Lando. Luca entered the Palace, obtained its approval by the cowered executive, then came to the ringhiera or outside platform of the Palace, and showed it to the cheering crowd; the document had been officially sealed by the Signorial notary Salutati, our notary carefully recorded\(^{63}\). The Ciompi rewarded Luca at this point. For years he had been a knight "of the popolo grasso", our author pointedly says; now he publicly renounced that earlier honor and was then made a knight "at the hands of the popolo minuto". A different source says he was then appointed the "captain of the popolo minuto", which in keeping with the bestowal of military honors in Florence would in this case have involved handing him the flag of the Angel. Originally an illegal Camaldolan banner, it now was the standard of the immense 24th gild of the wool workers. In any case, we know that Luca held that flag for ceremonies at the ringhiera\(^{64}\).

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\(^{61}\) See my "Neighbours", table VI, n. 1. Luca was buried in the church of S. Croce.

\(^{62}\) Rodolico, pp. 441f. I date according to my own reconstruction from the difficult sources; see my "Follow the Flag".

\(^{63}\) Scaramella, p. 80.

\(^{64}\) An anonymous chronicler calls Luca the minuti's champion; ibid., p. 117. Stefani says he was their captain; Cronaca fiorentina di Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, ed. N. Rodolico (Bologna, 1943), rubric 801.
The petition that was now law made these solemn ceremonies possible; its contents help reconstruct what happened in the square. The petition included two rewards for individuals. By the one, Luca’s legal status changed from *grande* to *popolano*, and that made it possible for him to be the *popolo*’s knight and its captain, though he was a citizen. By a second provision, Betto di Ciardo, that brave and courageous youthful flagbearer of the July revolution, was to receive a substantial monthly payment from the commune and along with a companion could now bear offensive and defensive weapons; here again, our author is the only source for information on Betto. Thus the wool worker called by the chivalrous term *franco* and the real noble Luca were the sole individual beneficiaries of the petition. It is difficult not to speculate that Betto was rewarded, perhaps at Luca’s request, because he dared to carry the Angel; such a reward for carrying a flag in revolt seems to have been made in July as well. Perhaps then it was Betto di Ciardo who handed over the flag of the Angel gild to Luca da Panzano on August 28 just as he had bestowed the Standard of Justice on Michele di Landò on July 22.

Luca da Panzano followed up this dramatic activity at the Palace with a foreboding move. He announced that he wanted to go to the Palace of the Parte Guelfa and procure its flag. In our author’s words he wanted to cry “‘Long Live the Guelphs and Kill the Ghibellines’ because he and his were and always had been Guelphs, and (he was) a chief of the Parte Guelfa.” The author does not tell us the seamy details of what followed: how on hearing that Luca and Tommasino were searching for a Parte flag with the help of two squadrons of Ciompi, the Eight Saints of the Ciompi, themselves elected with Luca’s backing, put out a contract on the Da Panzano and successfully ordered their squadrons to leave these magnates. He does not, in short, mention the split between the Ciompi and the...
Guelphs, the Angel and the Eagle of the Parte. Instead the writer admits that it was the Da Panzano's intention to “sweep the city” (correre la terra) of Ghibellines, presumably including those the author said were in the government, and he sympathizes with the undertaking! Every other chronicler expressed relief that these magnates had not found the flag they wanted, for they were sure that would have meant a wave of destruction⁶⁹). It is therefore incredible that our author says that “many people were happy and many sad” that they had not succeeded⁷⁰! Without doubt, our author favored the uprising of the Ciompi with the Guelphs.

Now we can understand why the writer viewed the impending defeat of the Ciompi in tragic, if heroic, terms: having cast aside their Guelph head, the poveri headed for certain defeat. Our author could sympathize with some minuti’s failure to see that a Palace conspiracy was closing in around them; he was, I think, one of the deceived. Yet the Ciompi themselves were not without blame. The Eight Saints had now moved from their Camaldolan headquarters to the Citrarno church of S. Maria Novella, where they closed ranks with the Crossbowmen of the Popolo Minuto⁷¹). The author recalled that “many citizens warned them that they were doing that which was then their undoing”; he must have been one of them. The writer seems to have thought that the poveri were doomed without the backing of the Guelphs⁷²).

The author maintained the link between high and low society in his narrative after September 1, 1378. He alternately reports on the vicious repression of the minuti martyrs by the Ghibelline government and keeps us informed of the activities of the Da Panzano. He lists all the clan members who were condemned by the commune in September. In October he lists the Da Panzanos banished by the government and those exempted from the bann. He details a Da

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⁶⁹) E.g. Scaramella, p. 117.
⁷⁰) Non vi si trovò; e molta gente, chi ne fu lieta e chi dolente, che non vi si trovò il confalone, ibid., p. 80. Perhaps speaking from a neighbour’s knowledge, the author says Luca returned “to his house, in great ire”; ibid.
⁷¹) Our best guide is Stefani, rubs. 800–802. See below for the crossbowmen.
⁷²) E molti cittadini gli avvertieno che facessono quello che poi fu danno loro, Scaramella, p. 79.
Panzano prison break. He lists three clansmen condemned in early 137973). This uniquely detailed chronicling of the family misfortunes in Florence is then complemented by his attention to its fate in exile. For the Da Panzano and the Gherardini, both neighbors of the Carcherelli, were among the “noble men of great potency” whose Sienese conspiracy caused that governmental fear our author relished74). It was their Guelphism that mattered. Thus when in April 1381 the son of Luca murdered Tommasino da Panzano in Siena on contract for the government of Florence, our writer branded this assassin a “traitor” obviously because it hurt the Guelph cause75). He waited until January 1382 for his, and its, vindication.

Bernardo Carcherelli

A remarkable man, this Guelph herald of the wool workers. We have already reviewed his clerical credentials, so evident in the literary format, in his witnessing of public speeches and executions, in his judgments of guilt and innocence, and in his historical knowledge. The classical intellectual middle-man himself excluded from office, our author despised those popolani grassi who trafficked in goods and men, he could and did sympathize with “poor” taxpayers in like straits. No merchant-politician would have been so friendly to the poor, and no poor man would have had the qualities of our author.

But why is the particular notary Bernardo Carcherelli a candidate for the authorship of this chronicle? Let us begin with the determination that the author had to be from the quarter of S. Croce, since he knew its officials but not those of other quarters. He reported in depth on the activities of several people from his area, the Da Panzanos, the Asini, a person named Smacca, and so on76), and the atten-

73) Respectively ibid., pp. 84, 85, 87, 90.
74) Ibid., pp. 64ff.; Corazzini, pp. 192–199.
75) Scaramella, p. 95.
76) Smacca's long addresses are given in Scaramella, pp. 87f. The author describes the bestowal of the Crossbowmen's quarter flags not in the legal order, but as if looking outward: from S. Croce to S. Giovanni to S. Maria Novella to S. Spirito, ibid., p. 77. Next to people in S. Croce, the author knew those in the
tion he lavished on Betto di Ciardo makes sense if in fact that hero also had a residence in S. Croce. Still more precisely, the author seems to have lived near the Palace (the S. Crocean ward of Carro) and the Piazza (Carro and Bue), an impression gained by the regularity of his reporting on events of that area and by certain language usages. The Carcherelli clan lived in fact around the corner from the Palace in the parish of S. Apollinare, whose church was little more than a stone’s throw from the palace of the podestà whose siege the author so precisely described. He was a solid taxpayer, the five florins he payed in a levy of April 1378 putting him in what Gene Brucker calls the affluent category. In 1363 he served as notary to the Officers of the Crossbowmen and in that capacity he knew Michele di Lando, who headed a squad of crossbowmen at the time. Bernardo was notary of the priorate in 1372. No sooner did the Guelphs return to Florence in early 1382 than Bernardo is found representing the gild of judges and notaries on a governmental commission, and in 1384 he repeated his stint as notary of the Signoria. I do not know when he died. He never held executive office.

Bernardo was not inactive during the summer of 1378 or during the regime that followed, however. Indeed it is during this latter period that we gain an exact profile of Carcherelli, and it perfectly

eastern part of Oltrarno best, that is, where the Da Panzano had their ancient palace. Thus the only one of the surviving Eight Saints he knew was from that area, ibid., p. 83. He almost certainly knew its August standard bearer, ibid., pp. 76, 82 (Bruno di Pagolo, ward of Scala). The several adverbs in the following indicate he was referring to his neighbourhood: Ci fu il figliuolo di messere Galeotto, qui dinanzi a’ signori; e dimorocci 3 di, ibid., p. 100. Note a parade of Florentines that ci deritornarono in Piazza, ibid., p. 101.

77) ASF, Prestanze, 333, f. 28v, and f. 31r for his notary brother Giusto; the exile Ugolino di Noldo de’ Gherardini (parish of S. Stefano, same ward), is on f. 4r. The amount of the assessment is in Brucker, Ciompi, p. 331.

78) Corazzini, p. 151.

80) Stefani, rub. 729.

81) Stefani, rub. 919; see Bernardo and his brother in the scrutiny of 1382 in: Delizie degli eruditi toscani, XVI (Florence, 1781), pp. 152, 156.

82) Stefani, rub. 980.
fits that of our author. We begin near its end, drawing on other sources for our information, since our author remains silent. According to one source, the commune in 1381 charged ser Bernardo with seizing the villa of Portico, and a second source describes how Florentine horse and foot took the place. Carcherelli's experience as notary to the militia officials comes to mind, and the author's interest in military formations is pronounced at just this point of time in his chronicle. In any case, Carcherelli obviously enjoyed the confidence of the priors this late in the regime, and of the S. Crocean Standard Bearer at the helm of government.

That same confidence had been misplaced for years. We recall that our author sympathized with the Florentine exiles in Siena in 1379–1380 and that this group included the Gherardini and Da Panzano, as well as one of Luca's fellow electors of the Eight Saints. What he does not mention, however, is an embassy that the Florentine government sent to the republic of Siena in the late summer of 1379 to demand that the exiled Guelphs be expelled. The ambassador was ser Bernardo. Another notary, the exiled ser Nofri di Piero, was on the spot in Siena, and his account of the visit snaps our identification into place:

Despite (his mission to have them expelled), all the said exiles went to visit him, because the said ser Bernardo was very Guelph ... Since the said ser Bernardo did not say why he had come to Siena, ser Nofri di ser Piero ... went to the priors of Siena and asked a friend of his what ser Bernardo had demanded. And (the prior) answered the said ser Nofri: 'That you especially and all the exiles and rebels of Florence be driven out. We told him we would give him an answer later'. And after some conversation, (the Sienese) agreed with ser Nofri on the

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83) Diario, p. 427.
84) Scaramella, pp. 94f.
85) Leonardo Raffacani, mentioned ibid., p. 95. The author's one-by-one listing of the bills before the Consiglio del Popolo strongly suggest he was in that body in Jan. and Feb. 1379, and his use of a first person plural at that time suggests governmental involvement, ibid., p. 90.
86) See above. The wool worker was Piero di Fede called Ciamo, Corazzini, p. 197.
response that was to be made (to ser Bernardo). So the said ser Nofri left the priors of Siena and went to the hostel of the said ser Bernardo, where the other exiles and rebels were. And the said ser Nofri said to the said ser Bernardo in the presence of all the other exiles: ‘Ser Bernardo, your are welcome. This brigade is very glad to see you and similarly any other Guelph of Florence. And we well know that you have been ordered to come here and that what you said to these (Sienese) signores you said most unwillingly. But in compliance with the commission you had, the following reply will be made to you’, etc. (Thus) the said ser Bernardo discovered that the said ser Nofri had learned from the said signores what he (‘Bernardo’) had told them. He got from (ser Nofri) the response he would (then) receive (from the said signores): he later heard (from the Sienese lords the response) ser Nofri had given him. The next day, wanting to leave and return to Florence ..., the other exiles asked the said ser Bernardo to remember them to the priors of Florence. And ser Bernardo carried back all the responses (to the Florentine government), and then said (to its members): ‘As long as ser Nofri does not leave Siena none of your exiles will be driven from Siena, because ser Nofri has too much influence there’. Messer Tommaso di Marco degli Strozzi and his friends, enemies of the Guelphs of Florence, rejoined: ‘Ser Bernardo is one of them.’ And (ser Bernardo) was in danger of having something done to him he would not have liked\(^7\).

As even notaries were wont to do, ser Nofri thus testified to the debt ser Bernardo owed him. Yet in the process of telling the tale, this source gives us a pocket political biography of Carcherelli so close to what we know of our author that I must equate the two. This neighbor of some of the key exiles sympathized with them and detested Tommaso Strozzi, the “evil man” ser Nofri identifies as Carcherelli’s particular enemy\(^8\). It is not surprising that our author welcomed the “resuscitation” of the Guelphs in early 1382 and the disgrace of Strozzi.

\(^7\) Scaramella, p. 63.
\(^8\) See Strozzi above.
Having established the similar biography of the author and Bernardo Carcherelli, we can now return to the Ciompi period and see the author's dramatic account of their defeat as in part a self-justification of his, Bernardo Carcherelli's, own deluded participation. I earlier argued that the author had to have been a notary at the scrutiny who as a soldier of some type accompanied the disgraced Standard Bearer home on September 1, 1378. That is a tall order, but in these dramatic August days, Bernardo Carcherelli was precisely a notary at arms.

Within days of assuming power, the government of Michele di Lando on July 28 officially established a militia of some 1500 “Crossbowmen of the popolo minuto”. The priors may have been constrained to employ hard-pressed minuti at a time little wool was being produced, and they certainly hoped to procure their loyalty by making them dependent on government wages\(^{89}\). The militia marched under the flags of the four quarters of Florence: according to our author, each quarter had twelve units under as many flags of that quarter, each of the 48 units being made up of 25 crossbowmen headed by a unit leader (caporale). Created “for the greater strength of the popolo minuto”, in the words of the author, the militia's particular task was to guard the Piazza della Signoria during the day, the quarters' contingents assuming that task for two days at a time\(^{90}\). Through the diary notation of another source, it is possible to determine the probable dates on which each quarter performed that task\(^{91}\). To some the guard in the Piazza might seem to guarantee that these priors would not be left defenseless as had been those disgraced during the July revolution; to others, it certainly appeared

\(^{89}\) Note the remarks of Brucker, Ciompi, pp. 328f., 334f.; see also my “Neighbours”. Scaramella, p. 114, says the corps was of 1000 balestrieri e (blank in text) palvesai per guardia. Thus the corps may have been two-thirds crossbowmen and one-third shieldbearers.

\(^{90}\) Scaramella, p. 77.

\(^{91}\) On Aug. 19 the balestrieri of the quarter of S. Giovanni came to the square and were paid; Diario, p. 375. Assuming that this was one of that quarter's two guard days, a backward calculation would put the quarter of S. Spirito in the square on July 28, the day the Crossbowmen began. Since S. Spirito came first legally, that would tend to confirm my hypothesis as to the guard cycle.
they were there to prevent the government from betraying the *minuti*. The militia was hated by the established gildsmen\(^{92}\).

In such circumstances, Michele di Lando and his collaborators carefully chose the leadership of this militia, drawing from those as faithful to the regime as possible. At the pinnacle of the organization were eight officers, two per quarter, and under them four actual field captains or dukes, one from each quarter. Each of these captains in turn commanded the twelve *caporalì* of his quarter and the upwards of 250 men in its twelve squads. None other than Carcherelli was "captain-general of all the crossbowmen" of the quarter of S. Croce\(^{93}\). The choice made sense, the notary being acquainted with such an organization and having known Michele di Lando as a *caporale* years before. This crucial position put Carcherelli in a position to participate in the dramatic events of late August.

We know six things about the role of the *balestrieri del popolo minuto* in these tumultuous events. First, the captain for S. Spirito, Meo del Grasso, was involved in the Ciompi conspiracy from its start Oltrarno, along with Luca da Panzano and several important wool workers\(^{94}\). Second, large numbers of the corps of crossbowmen backed the plot against the government when on the evening of August 28 the Eight Saints of the *popolo minuto* moved their headquarters to the Citrarno church of S. Maria Novella. Other chroniclers saw these units as the spearhead of the revolution; "many citizens", we recall, urged moderation on the Saints\(^{95}\). Third, the chronicler Stefani says that faced with this threat, the government attracted some of the militia leaders away from the conspiracy. Next, our author says that part of the government's own plan was to arrest

\(^{92}\) Scaramella, pp. 36, 130; Diario, p. 381.

\(^{93}\) See my "Neighbours", table IV. The title is found in Deliberazioni, f. 12v.

\(^{94}\) Rodolico, pp. 441f.; Trexler, "Neighbours", table IV. Since our author makes clear that the only *minuti* with crossbows were those in the quarter companies (Scaramella, p. 84), it may have been S. Spirito's Crossbowmen that led a *minuti* mass from Camaldoli into the main square on Aug. 31, and precipitated conflict, ibid., p. 82.

\(^{95}\) See above. Stefani (rub. 800) has *tutti i balestrieri* in the square during the first manifestation of late August; an anonymous has them in the crowd that marched from S. Marco to the Piazza on the 28th, Scaramella, pp. 116f; a judicial document shows them at S. Maria Novella, Rodolico, p. 444.
the 48 caporali of the crossbowmen so as to neutralize the force. Fifth, my calculations suggest that the quarter of crossbowmen charged with guarding the Piazza on the decisive day of August 31 was none other than Carcherelli's contingent from S. Croce! Finally the decisive losing battle was led by a contingent of crossbowmen, who defended the Angel.

The author's account of that day divides into two parts. The latter began later in the afternoon when a mass of popolani minuti from Camaldoli arrived in the square; the decisive battle and defeat of the Ciompi followed, one movingly described by our author. But it is the same writer's account of earlier events of that day that is more significant to our inquiry, for he himself was almost certainly one of those duped by a great governmental trick detailed by our writer.

It began as follows: the government arrested two of the Eight Saints who had been sent to the Palace with a petition from S. Maria Novella. Knowing that this would mean trouble, the priors spread the rumor that the Saints were planning to seil the city to a foreign mercenary. Then Michele di Landò and the prioral provost for the day, Benedetto da Carlone, emerged dramatically from the Palace and rode out of the Piazza in search of these "traitorous" Ciompi. The idea was that with the Standard of Justice, these officials would draw behind them out of the square all of the popolo minuto who were there; while this mass was gone, the popolo grasso would occupy the Piazza and then refuse the minuti re-entry. In laying this plan before us, our author did not think he had to mention that the city law required all Florentines to follow the Standard in just such circumstances. That of course included the brigade of crossbowmen who

96) Stefani, rub. 804. Scaramella, p. 81: E ch'è signori dovessero mandare per tutti i caporali di balestrieri, e fossono tenuti. The author presumably refers to the 48 caporali and not to the four capitani.
97) Probably on the following day, Sept. 1, as well; see above, n. 91.
98) Scaramella, p. 82. Significantly, all chroniclers agree in silence that the Crossbowmen of the popolo minuto did not have their quarter flags that day; thus a communal organization defended the gild flag of the wool workers.
99) Questo si fece per levagli di sulla Piazza, Scaramella, p. 81.
100) Mentioned by Goro Dati in his Storia, the law is referred to by Fossati, "Tumulto", p. 195.
were in the square on public duty: the government had chosen a tactic that would get the crossbowmen of S. Croce, who had a right to be there, out of the square.

The author says that the plan failed because when the great mass of *minuti* returned to the square and found its mouth blocked, "they strung their crossbows, valiantly drew their swords, and entered the Piazza by force", Clearly the crossbowmen thought they were being prevented from guarding the Piazza as they were charged\(^{101}\). Intimidated, the *grassi* drew back, but soon took another tack to reach their goal. They screamed a demand that the two members of the Eight imprisoned in the Palace be given over to the crowd because, they claimed, they were among the traitors. At this point the author's account becomes critical:

But the *popolo minuto* said: 'Don't throw (them down). Let us determine if they have sinned, (and if they have, then one can) purify, giving severe justice with reason (on our side).’ Then the captain of the *popolo* kept circulating with the (*minuti*'s) armed force, saying: ... 'Open your eyes, for you are being betrayed by your own (*minuti* officials).’ But they did not think of that, and did not take further precautionary steps, because they did not believe they would be betrayed by those who were the *signori* ...\(^{102}\).

Scholars have been puzzled by this reference to a *capitano del popolo*. It was certainly not Luca da Panzano, who was long gone from the scene. Nor could the homonymous foreign judicial official have been involved\(^{103}\). But if one asks who was the captain of the

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\(^{101}\) *Di che tesoro balestra, e sì si misero allora colle spade in mano valorosamente; e sì entrarono in sulla Piazza per forza*, Scaramella, p. 81.

\(^{102}\) *Allora el capitano del popolo sempre era con loro armato dicendo: I' temo che voi non state traditi*, ibid.

\(^{103}\) See Gherardi's opinion in Diario, p. 377. This foreign official had been scheduled to re-assume his judicial duties on just that day, Scaramella, p. 115. Our author has him hearing cases in early September (ibid., p. 84), and he was active on Sept. 1; Diario, p. 519. Yet it can be all but excluded that, even in the unlikely case he was in the midst of the tension, he would have warned the *minuti* against the *grassi*; the latter were, after all, the group he was constitutionally sworn to defend against the magnates.
popolo (minuto) discharging his duty in the Piazza on that day, the answer is certainly Bernardo Carcherelli. In short, here the author intimates that just as he as captain of the S. Crocean balestrieri at S. Maria Novella had advised the Eight against their course, so here in the Piazza to guard the minuti he warned them vainly of the betrayal.

The gullible notary-soldier had led his crossbowmen out of the square behind the Standard of Justice, crying: "Death to those who want a lord!" In part certainly because of his own "valiant" leadership, the troup could however re-enter. Returned to the square, it was his judicial wisdom that prevented the defenestration of the two Saints. Our author was always judicious. It was the writer himself who better late than never saw through the Palace plot, but could not convince his fated heroes.

On the following day the Ciompi signori had to leave the Palace. Friend of the disgraced Standard Bearer and of the Ciompi, he wanted to help. As a notary who was a mediator by profession, he could help at a moment no politician would have dared. The Ciompi had had no political help in these last days. As captain of the crossbowmen of S. Croce, probably still on duty this second day of their tour, he could protect his charge. Ser Bernardo di ser Taddeo Carcherelli stepped forward. He placed his hand beneath the arm of Baroccio, and took him to his home near the church of S. Appolinare until the furor died down.

Conclusion

Not a ciompo but a notary wrote this rare chronicle that praises revolutionaries. Praises them ... but does not know their social being. Bernardo Carcherelli did not speak for the indigents whose unpaid labor made the Florentine wool industry profitable, he did not portray the misery of the workshop and the uncertainties of the market that made revolt essential in the summer of 1378. To the

104) Ibid., p. 81. Further on the author's gullibility and that of the Oltrarno part of the minuti, see my "Follow the Flag".
contrary. Not only does our author describe the political rather than the social disabilities of his heroes; he displays strong sentiment for the Guelph aristocracy of Florence, for people like Luca da Panzano who despised trade and played no creative role in the commercial life of the city. Our author was a friend of the highest and the lowest statuses. What are we to make of this type of political stance?

The writer was not conservative; his revolutionary credentials are impeccable. He may have thanked God for the rain that prevented the crowd from torching palaces the night of July 20–21; clearly, the author did not favor attacks on property or its formal redistribution. But he was also thanking his divinity because the rain changed arsonists into revolutionaries. The author favored the July overturn, and his reticence about the Ciompi revolt of August stemmed only from his conviction that it would not succeed, the evidence that it had not succeeded. Elementally but rightly, he viewed the forced, massive, restructuring of the gild system as strengthening the minute people against the fat ones. His almost exclusively political focus, the very absence of a social consciousness, adds to the revolutionary thrust of the chronicle.

Carcherelli’s Guelphism does not dilute that thrust. Our historically minded author might have pointed out that here as at other points in Florentine history, aristocrats befriended the lower elements of the social system; it is not clear that the dominant bourgeois commune was the best friend of such people. This has nothing to do with any psychological qualities of such aristocrats or with the famous gullibility of the poor. The pattern of association between these two groups noted by Brucker comes rather from their marginalization at the hands of the dominant grassi, which made such alliances in both’s interest, and from each group’s utility to the other in establishing, and maintaining, that most fundamental of all political rights, the public manifestation of group solidarities.

The history of the Florentine republic can be viewed as a century-long struggle between the principles of honor and equality, honor being internally represented by the Parte Guelfa and equality by the gild fraternities. In the present article I have shown that one level of opinion saw the interest of the disenfranchised being linked to the honorable status of Florentine society. In a recent work, John
Najemy argued that the rhetoric or fraternal language of the gilds laid a groundwork for the emergence of the Ciompi\(^{105}\), and it must be said that this variation on the theme of an identity between bourgeois and worker interests has the advantage of substituting substantial argument for mere assertion. Yet it was the Parte Guelfa that offered the textile workers a model for the public representation of group honor, and not the gilds. The Parte’s pompous armed parades had been a necessity to merchant Florence, because they created credit abroad. In the summer of 1378, Bernardo Carcherelli saw in the valiant image of the Ciompi at arms a Guelph image of the people at arms.

\(^{105}\) Najemy, Corporatism (cf. n. 21), esp. pp. 227–243 for his stimulating interpretation of \textit{adequatio membrorum}. 