

Opposition to Government  
in Early Sixteenth-Century Florence  
1494-1530

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## Abstract

This examination of opposition tries to understand the political history of an Italian city-state in a new way. The aim of this study is to gain a better understanding of the nature of political conflict in Florence, and of the reasons for the instability of Florentine political life in the early sixteenth century. The concern is with plots, the violent overthrow of governments, and those condemned for speaking against the regime, rather than with simply critical opinion. These episodes of conflict between regimes and their opponents are the events from which the historian can learn most, both about the reasons for political conflict and its outcome, and about the strengths and weaknesses of both regimes and their opponents.

Some of this opposition, such as the plot of February 1527, and those condemned for outspokenness against the regime throughout the period, is completely unknown to modern historians, and none has been examined in depth. This study examines opposition systematically for the first time, from a number of perspectives that have previously been neglected. It is based on extensive research in the Florentine archives, which permit us to give a full account, presented in the Appendices, of the political and social backgrounds of more than two hundred individuals involved in plots and other acts against the regime.

There are two key aspects of opposition which concern Part One of this study: the role of foreign support in plots and the way in which conspiracy was affected by the advent of the Italian Wars in 1494; and how far conspiracy was characterized by the desire to introduce an aristocratic government to Florence or to re-establish the past regime. Part Two examines contemporary definitions and conceptions of political offences; the punishment of political crime; common attitudes towards plots and the way in which conspirators sought to explain and justify their deeds.

The political and social backgrounds of opponents are examined in Part Three. The following questions are considered: how far was conspiracy the work of former supporters of the regime or long-standing opponents who had always sought its overthrow, of those from inside or outside the ruling circles of government, of

those in power or those they had thrown out of it; what was the relationship between plots and the way in which regimes treated their opponents and supporters; and what were the respective roles of wealth, youth and nobility in plots? By considering opposition from these perspectives, this study recovers a significant part of the political history of Florence, and forces a re-evaluation both of the nature of political conflict in the city after 1494, and of the reasons for the instability of Florentine political life in the early sixteenth century.

## Declaration by the Candidate

This thesis has been composed by H. A. L. Knox, and is all his own work.

H. A. L. Knox

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Thanks are due to the staffs of all the archives and libraries where I have worked, and in particular to those of the Archivio di Stato and the Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence. I am grateful to Cluny Sheeler, who assisted in proof-reading the final draft, and to John Gooch, for some advice on style. Jenny Litster, Mathew Grenby and Liz Cadogan have all made it a pleasure to live and study in Edinburgh. My greatest debt, during this last year, is to Patricia Mulligan.

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## Notes and Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes for the principal archives, libraries, manuscript sources, and journals.

A.S.F.	Archivio di Stato, Florence
A.S.I.	<i>Archivio Storico Italiano</i>
A.S.M., A.G., Estera	Archivio di Stato, Mantua, Archivio Gonzaga, Corrispondenza Estera
A.S.Mo., Canc. Duc., Firenze	Archivio di Stato, Modena, Cancelleria Ducale, Estero, Carteggio Ambasciatori, Firenze
B.N.F.	Biblioteca Nazionale, Florence
C.P.	Consulte e Pratiche
C. Strozz.	Carte Stroziane
D.B.I.	<i>Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani</i>
Dieci di Balìa, Missive	Dieci di Balìa, Legazioni e Commissarie, Lettere Missive
Dieci di Balìa, Responsive	Dieci di Balìa, Legazioni e Commissarie, Lettere Responsive
F.P.	Fondo Principale
Magl.	Magliabecchi
M.A.P.	Archivio Mediceo Avanti il Principato
N.A.	Nuovi Acquisti
O.G.	Otto di Guardia, Epoca Repubblicana
Otto di Pratica, Missive	Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Lettere Missive
Otto di Pratica, Responsive	Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Lettere Responsive
Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a.	Signori e Collegi, Deliberazioni fatti in forza di ordinaria autorità



Sig., Minutari

Signori, Carteggi, Minutari

Sig., Missive

Signori, Carteggio Missive, Prima Cancelleria

All dates have been given in the modern rather than the Florentine style.

All quotations have been translated. The original Latin or Italian has been supplied in the footnotes where this has been thought appropriate and helpful.

## Introduction

In the period from the overthrow of the Medici in 1494 until the capitulation of the Last Republic at the end of the siege in 1530 there were conspiracies to overthrow the regime in Florence uncovered in 1497, 1510, 1513, 1522 and February 1527. Plots succeeded in forcing the overthrow of the Gonfalonier for life, Piero Soderini, in August 1512, and the overthrow of the popular government two weeks later in September. In April 1527 the revolt known as the *Tumulto del Venerdì*, whose leaders had been conspiring against the regime for some months, briefly forced the overthrow of the Medici. There were many less threatening attacks against governments throughout the period, and between 1502 and 1530 some fifty individuals were condemned for speaking disparagingly of the regime.

These verbal offences, plots, and the violent overthrow of regimes form the opposition to government that concerns this study. Some of them, such as the conspiracy of February 1527, and those condemned for speaking out against the regime throughout the period, are completely unknown to modern historians. Others are more familiar, yet this opposition has never been studied systematically before. Direct concern with opposition or opponents to the regime in early sixteenth-century Florence has been very limited indeed. There was a brief study of the plot of 1522 made over a century ago,<sup>1</sup> and there have been articles on Bernardo Rucellai and on Niccolò Valori.<sup>2</sup> There are glimpses of opposition to the Medici to be found in a recent history of the followers of Savonarola,<sup>3</sup> and in biographies of Francesco

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<sup>1</sup> A. Zandonati, *La congiura contro il cardinale Giulio dei Medici* (Rovereto, 1891).

<sup>2</sup> F. Gilbert, 'Bernardo Rucellai and the Orti Oricellari: a Study on the origin of Modern Political Thought', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, xii (1949), pp. 101-32; C. Kovesi, 'Niccolò Valori and the Medici Restoration of 1512: Politics, Eulogies and the Preservation of a Family Myth', *Rinascimento*, Ser. 2, xxvii (1987), pp. 301-325; R. Pesman Cooper, 'Political Survival in Early Sixteenth-Century Florence: the Case of Niccolò Valori', *Florence and Italy. Renaissance Studies in Honour of Nicolai Rubinstein*, ed. P. Denly and C. Elam (London, 1988), pp. 73-90.

<sup>3</sup> L. Polizzotto, *The Elect Nation: The Savonarolan movement in Florence 1494-1545* (Oxford, 1994). See also Idem, 'The Medici and the Savonarolans 1512-1527: the Limitations of Personal Government and the Medicean Patronage System', *Patronage, Art and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. F. Kent, P. Simons and J. Eade (Oxford, 1987), pp. 135-153.

Vettori and Cardinal Francesco Soderini.<sup>4</sup> The two most recent general studies of Florentine political history after 1494 both contain insights into opposition to popular governments and the Medici, but have not sought either to examine particular conspiracies in any depth, or to consider plots and the violent overthrow of regimes in general.<sup>5</sup>

This study examines opposition systematically for the first time, from a number of perspectives that previously have been largely neglected. The key questions regarding opposition to government in Florence have thus far been ignored. Scholars have not asked what Florentines deemed to be a political offence, for example, and whether that changed from one regime to another; nor whether different regimes were equally able or willing to punish political crime. There has been little consideration of how far conspiracy was characterized by the desire to introduce an aristocratic government to Florence or to re-establish the past regime, nor of how much plots were the work of those from inside or outside the ruling circles of government, of former supporters of the regime or long-standing opponents, of those in power or those they had thrown out of power. It is usually assumed that plots were the work of the young rather than their elders, but it remains to be examined whether this was in fact the case. Questions have yet to be asked concerning how far conspiracy was affected by the advent of the Italian Wars in 1494; about the nature of the relationship between plots and the way in which regimes treated their supporters and opponents; or that between plots and common attitudes towards conspiracy.

The rich archival sources of the period permit us to examine these questions about opposition systematically, and to provide some answers to them. The records of the decisions and deliberations of the magistracies and courts concerned with criminal justice, the *Otto di Guardia*, the *Quarantia* and the *Signoria*, survive almost completely intact and record those condemned for plots and verbal offences against the regime. From the archives of the *Tratte* it has been possible to give an account, presented in the Appendices, of the political and social backgrounds of more than two

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<sup>4</sup> K. J. P. Lowe, *Church and Politics in Renaissance Italy: the Life and Career of Cardinal Francesco Soderini* (Cambridge, 1993); R. Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori: Florentine Citizen and Medici Servant* (London, 1972).

<sup>5</sup> J. N. Stephens, *The Fall of the Florentine Republic 1512-1530* (Oxford, 1983); H. C. Butters, *Governors and Government in Early Sixteenth-Century Florence 1502-1519* (Oxford, 1985).

hundred individuals involved in plots and other acts against the regime. This includes the offices held by both opponents and their fathers, their membership of the major or minor guilds, and the ages of those who conspired against the regime. Unpublished lists of supporters and opponents of the Medici regime are also of particular value with regards to the prosopography of opponents. Full use has been made of both official and private correspondence, laws and the deliberations of councils, magistracies, and advisory bodies, the reports of the Mantuan and Ferrarese ambassadors to Florence, the surviving examinations of conspirators, and of the published and unpublished diaries, chronicles, histories, political writings and tracts of both opponents and other contemporaries.

There is an evident need to be judicious in dealing with sources regarding plots and other attacks against the regime, not least the examinations of those involved. Both regimes and conspirators sought to present their own interpretation of events, and all sources concerning opposition come in the end from either a hostile or supportive point of view. There is also a limit to the social and political realities that can be extracted from the records of the criminal justice system, and the conclusions that can be drawn from them. As Michelle Perrot best put it, there are no 'criminal facts', only 'criminal judgements'.<sup>6</sup>

This is the first attempt to study conspiracies and other acts against the regime systematically in any period of Florence's medieval and Renaissance past. Conspiracies and the violent overthrow of regimes in Florence, as elsewhere in Renaissance Italy, have historically been treated in isolation, with little attempt to seek for patterns and comparisons amongst them.<sup>7</sup> There has been continuing interest in the Ciompi revolt of 1378,<sup>8</sup> and there have been studies of popular protest and

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<sup>6</sup> M. Perrot, 'Delinquance et système pénitentiaire en France au XIXe siècle', *Annales. Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, xxx (1975), p. 72.

<sup>7</sup> A point made in relation to plots in Italy in a recent study of trials for conspiracy against the Pope. See K. J. P. Lowe, 'The Political Crime of Conspiracy in Fifteenth and Sixteenth-Century Rome', *Crime, Society and the Law in Renaissance Italy*, ed. T. Dean and K. J. P. Lowe (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 184-203.

<sup>8</sup> A. Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi: les hommes, les lieux, le travail* (Paris, 1993); R. Trexler, *Power and Dependence in Renaissance Florence*, iii. *The Workers of Renaissance Florence* (New York, 1993); *Il Tumulto dei Ciompi: un momento di storia fiorentina ed europea* (Convegno Internazionale di Studi, 1979) (Florence, 1981); N. Rodolico, *I Ciompi: una pagina di storia del proletario operaio* (Florence, 1945); G. Brucker, 'The Ciompi Revolution', *Florentine Studies. Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. N. Rubinstein (London, 1968), pp. 314-56.

insurrection in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>9</sup> There have been accounts of the aristocratic reaction against the Medici of 1465-6,<sup>10</sup> the Pazzi conspiracy of 1478,<sup>11</sup> the overthrow of the Medici in 1494,<sup>12</sup> and of the assassination of Alessandro de' Medici in 1537.<sup>13</sup> A recent account of contemporary critical opinion of Lorenzo the Magnificent looks further than specific events or popular protest,<sup>14</sup> but stops far short of any methodical examination of plots in general and other attacks against the regime of the sort undertaken here. Opposition to government elsewhere in Renaissance Italy has been similarly neglected, with the notable exceptions of a study of rebellion in Siena,<sup>15</sup> and a broad but brief sweep through political conflict in the city-states in general from the rise of the Commune until the fifteenth century.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> N. Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto: note di storia fiorentina 1343-1378* (Florence, 1968); S. K. Cohn, Jr., *The Labouring Classes in Renaissance Florence* (New York, 1980); Idem, 'Florentine Insurrection, 1342-85, in Comparative Perspective', *The English Rising of 1381*, ed. T. Ashton and R. Hilton (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 143-65.

<sup>10</sup> A. Muncicchi, *La fazione antimedicca detta 'del Poggio'* (Florence, 1911); G. Pampaloni, 'Fermenti di riforme democratiche nella Firenze medicea del Quattrocento', *A.S.I.*, cxix (1961), pp. 11-62; Idem, 'Il giuramento pubblico in Palazzo Vecchio a Firenze e un patto giurato degli anti-medicei, maggio 1466', *Bulletino Senese di storia patria*, lxxi (1964), pp. 212-38; N. Rubinstein, 'La confessione di Francesco Neroni e la congiura antimedicca del 1466', *A.S.I.*, cxxvi (1968), pp. 373-88; P. C. Clarke, 'A Siennese Note on 1466', *Florence and Italy: Renaissance Studies in Honour of Nicolai Rubinstein*, ed. P. Denly and C. Elam (London, 1988), pp. 43-52. See also N. Rubinstein, 'Florentine Constitutionalism and Medici Ascendancy in the Fifteenth Century', *Florentine Studies. Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. N. Rubinstein (London, 1968), pp. 442-463; M. Phillips, *The Memoir of Marco Parenti. A Life in Medici Florence* (Princeton, 1987); P. C. Clarke, *The Soderini and the Medici: Power and Patronage in Renaissance Florence* (Oxford, 1990).

<sup>11</sup> H. Acton, *The Pazzi Conspiracy* (London, 1979).

<sup>12</sup> G. Guidi, *Ciò che accadde al tempo della Signoria di Novembre-Dicembre in Firenze l' anno 1494* (Florence, 1988).

<sup>13</sup> F. Martini, *Lorenzino de' Medici e il tirannicidio nel rinascimento* (Florence, 1882); P. Ghauthiez, *Lorenzaccio (Lorenzin de Médicis), 1514-1548* (Paris, 1904); M. Vannucci, *Lorenzaccio. Lorenzo de' Medici: un ribelle in famiglia* (Rome, 1984).

<sup>14</sup> A. Brown, 'Lorenzo and Public Opinion in Florence: the Problem of Opposition', *Lorenzo il Magnifico e il suo mondo*, ed. G. Garfagnini (Florence, 1994), pp. 61-85. Also of interest with regards to opposition to Lorenzo is P. C. Clarke, 'Lorenzo de' Medici and Tommaso Soderini', *Lorenzo de' Medici. Studi*, ed. G. Garfagnini (Florence, 1992), pp. 67-102.

<sup>15</sup> W. Bowsky, 'The Anatomy of Rebellion in Fourteenth-Century Siena: From Commune to Signory?', *Violence and Civil Disorder in Italian Cities, 1200-1500*, ed. L. Martines (Berkeley and London, 1972), pp. 229-73.

<sup>16</sup> L. Martines, 'Political Conflict in the Italian City States', *Government and Opposition*, iii (1968), pp. 69-91. See also Idem, 'Political Violence in the Thirteenth Century', *Violence and Civil Disorder in Italian Cities, 1200-1500*, ed. L. Martines (Berkeley and London, 1972), pp. 331-53.

Through a broad consideration of plots and other acts against the regime, from a number of viewpoints, the examination of opposition which follows tries to understand the political history of an Italian city-state in a new way. The aim is to gain a better understanding of the nature political conflict and the reasons for the political instability in Florence during the early *Cinquecento*. The concern is with plots, outspokenness against the regime, and the violent overthrow of governments, rather than with simply critical opinion, because these are episodes of conflict between regimes and their opponents. They are the events from which the historian can learn most, both about the reasons for political conflict and its outcome, about the strengths and weaknesses of both regimes and their opponents.

Opposition is examined from three broad perspectives. In Part One, opposition is considered within the general political context, both foreign and domestic. The role of foreign support in plots is examined in Chapter One, which explores the way in which conspiracy was affected by the conflicts on the Italian peninsula brought about by the French invasion of Italy in 1494. In Chapter Two we compare the roles played in conspiracy by the desire to establish an aristocratic government on the one hand, and the desire to re-establish the past regime, whether that of the Medici or popular government, on the other. The concern of Part Two is with attitudes to opposition. Chapter Three examines contemporary definitions and conceptions of political crime, and Chapter Four considers the punishment of it. The commonly accepted notions in Florence regarding the utility and legitimacy of plots, and the way in which conspirators sought to explain and justify their deeds, are examined in Chapter Five.

In Part Three the concern is with the political and social backgrounds of opponents. Chapter Six considers the political careers of conspirators, and seeks to determine how far plots were the work of former supporters of the regime or long-standing opponents who had always sought its overthrow, of those from inside or outside the ruling circles of government, of those in power or those thrown out of it. The relationship between plots and the way in which regimes treated their opponents and supporters is the concern of Chapter Seven. In Chapter Eight the social background of conspirators are examined, and we compare the roles of wealth, age and nobility in plots. It is hoped that through considering opposition in these ways,

this study will recover a significant part of the political history of Florence, and force a re-evaluation both of the nature of political conflict in the city after 1494, and of the reasons for the instability of Florentine political life in the early sixteenth century.

## Part One

### The Political Context



## External Instability: The Role of Foreign Support

Conspiracies against the regime in Florence were more frequent after 1494 than they had been in the fifteenth century. In the thirty-six years from 1494 to 1530 there were conspiracies to overthrow the regime uncovered in 1497, 1510, 1513, and 1522. To these we can now add the Giachinotti-Pitti plot discovered in February 1527, and unknown to modern historians. Conspiracies succeeded in toppling the Gonfalonier for life, Piero Soderini, in August 1512 and in overthrowing the popular regime two weeks later in September. The leaders of the *Tumulto del Venerdì* in April 1527 had been conspiring against the regime for some months, and while the revolt that took place may have been sparked off accidentally, an uprising had been planned, perhaps even for the very next day.

Plots had been far less frequent in the years before 1494. In the twenty-five years from when Lorenzo assumed leadership of the regime in 1469 until the expulsion of the Medici in 1494 only three plots had been uncovered against the regime, in 1478, 1481 and April 1494. Yet there had been earlier periods in Florentine history, the three decades following the Ciompi revolt in 1378 was only the most recent, when plots had occurred with far more frequency than they ever did in the early sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> What most sets apart the period after 1494 is not the frequency of plots against the regime, but the frequency with which the regime was overthrown, whether by the direct use of violent force as in 1512, or by constitutional means, though with the threat of violence in the background, as in 1494, May 1527 and 1530. Given that background of instability, what is arguably most remarkable

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<sup>1</sup> G. Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton, 1978), pp. 49, 56, 139-41, 171-2, and *passim*.

about the pattern of conspiracy after 1494 is that plots were not more frequent, and only happened when they did.

For throughout the period there were always discontented citizens who desired the overthrow of the regime, and who, as we shall see later, expressed their discontent in open and public verbal attacks against the regime throughout the period. There were intrigues, suspected plots and aborted plots. One example of an aborted plot is a little known episode of 1509 reported by both Galeotto Cei and Jacopo Pitti. One of the Priors for January and February of that year, Neri Capponi, is said to have suggested to one of his colleagues, Ugolino Mazzinghi, that they assassinate Soderini, but Mazzinghi refused and dissuaded Capponi from pursuing his plan further.<sup>2</sup> Out of this continual discontent, real and identifiable attempts to overthrow the regime, our conspiracies, emerged in only six of the thirty-six years of the period. In the context of perennial discontent plots appear to have been rare indeed.

Throughout the period the discontented discussed the possibilities and opportunities to overthrow the regime. Indeed some of those who did conspire against the regime, such as the plotters of 1497 and 1512, can be found to have been thinking about doing so for some years beforehand. Why then did plots occur only when they did? What occasion or opportunity had the conspirators been waiting for? The answer to that question, almost always, was outside help, the support of foreign arms. Almost all those who plotted to overthrow the regime were only prepared to proceed with foreign military backing, and almost all the conspiracies of the period were only undertaken with the intention of obtaining the support of foreign arms, and they advanced only once that support had been acquired. Foreign arms were not the only resource conspirators desired, as we shall see, but they were the most important and that in shortest supply. The possibility and opportunity of gaining the armed support of a foreign power was the one factor, which more than any other, dictated the timing of plots and the pattern of conspiracy through the period.

The unwillingness of conspirators to proceed without outside help meant that foreign events dictated not only the timing but the progress of conspiracies. Plots

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<sup>2</sup> G. Cei, 'Storia di Fiorenza, 1494-1509', B.N.F., F.P., II-140, f. 114<sup>v</sup>; J. Pitti, 'Istoria fiorentina', ed. F. Polidori, A.S.I., Ser. 1, i (1842), p. 96.

floundered when, as in 1497 and 1522, the foreign support they were depending on failed to appear. And when the time came for the conspirators to strike, it was foreign support, or the lack of it, that dictated their success. It was the overwhelming presence of the Spanish army outside the city that enabled conspirators to eject Soderini from the Palace without resistance in August 1512, and to force the *parlamento* with equal facility in September, and it was the lack of the outside help its leaders were hoping for, that meant the *Tumulto del Venerdì* was crushed.

The extent to which not only the success, but the very occurrence of conspiracy in early sixteenth-century Florence depended on foreign support has not been sufficiently recognized before. Indeed, with the exception of the overthrow of Soderini and the *parlamento* in 1512,<sup>3</sup> and the *Tumulto* in 1527,<sup>4</sup> the crucial role of foreign support even in particular conspiracies has been largely ignored, and the full story of the relationship between foreign events and the formation, success and failure of plots in 1512 and 1527 still remains to be told. Yet an understanding of how far plots depended on foreign support not only helps to explain the pattern of conspiracy throughout the period, but reveals the full extent to which the security of regimes in Florence ultimately rested on their ability to secure themselves from external military threat. For plots were testaments to the diplomatic errors of the regime, and their success the result of its military collapse. Plots thus provide dramatic evidence of how much the instability of Florentine politics after 1494 was the result of the instability of the Italian political scene after 1494, of the conflicts between the Pope, France and Spain, and the historical military weakness that made Florence so prey to them.

Whilst the security of all regimes ultimately lay in their ability to defend themselves from external military threat, this proved to be doubly so for the Medici. Amongst those who conspired against the Medici in 1527 were leading members of the regime for whom the diplomatic failures of the Medici provided not just the opportunity, but also the reason to conspire against them, that of saving Florence from the ruin to which Clement seemed willing to risk the city for the sake of the Papacy. The security of the Medici depended on their diplomatic success not only

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<sup>3</sup> See the brief remarks in R. Pesman Cooper, 'La caduta di Piero Soderini e il "governo popolare". Pressione esterne e dissenso interno', *A.S.I.*, cxliiii (1985), pp. 226-7, 256; Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 62-3.

<sup>4</sup> C. Roth, *The Last Florentine Republic* (London, 1925), pp. 17, 20; Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 195-6, 201.

because it enabled them to defend themselves from their opponents in the city, but also to maintain the support of leading members of the regime.

However, plots that preyed on the external weaknesses of the regime were also evidence of its internal strength. They testified not only to the weakness of the regime abroad, but to the weakness of its opponents at home. Opponents could not threaten the security of the regime unless they had the support of foreign arms. The discontented, they admitted, were not powerful enough to overthrow the regime without outside help. Even when conspirators believed that discontent with the regime was widespread amongst the *popolo*, they believed the *popolo* to be a weak and unreliable foundation upon which to base an attempt to overthrow the regime. Guicciardini warned his sons in 1530 not to attempt to make ‘political change’ (*novità*) in the hope of being followed by the ‘popolo’ since this was a ‘dangerous foundation’. The *popolo* lacked courage and often had a ‘different fantasy’ from those who sought to rouse it, and could even turn against them, as it had against Brutus and Cassius.<sup>5</sup>

This was sound advice, as Luigi Manelli’s failed appeal to popular favour in 1503 demonstrated.<sup>6</sup> Piero Vaglianti recorded at the time how the ‘vile’ and ‘worthless’ Florentine *popolo*, good only for ‘jeering’ and ‘chattering’, had as usual abandoned someone who acted in its favour at the first sign of difficulty, and he concluded that it was ‘madness’ to attempt to win the favour of a *popolo* that could be ‘pushed around’ and ‘managed’ as one wished. The ‘grandi’ had perceived this and accordingly did what was ‘necessary’ to keep the *popolo* in check. Manelli should have remembered, Vaglianti wrote, the words of Giorgio Scali in the 1380s: ‘whoever bases themselves with reverence on the *popolo*, bases themselves on shit (*merda*)’.<sup>7</sup> The failure of the *Tumulto del Venerdì* was to provide the ultimate proof of the inability of the *popolo*, no matter how discontented, to overthrow the regime without outside help, and of the wisdom of conspirators in seeking to rely on foreign support.

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<sup>5</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Scritti politici e ricordi*, ed. R. Palmarocchi (Bari, 1933), pp. 310-11: ‘Ricordi’, C. 121.

<sup>6</sup> The case is discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

<sup>7</sup> P. Vaglianti, *Storia dei suoi tempi, 1492-1514*, ed. G. Berti, M. Luzzati and E. Tongiorgi (Pisa, 1982), p. 174.

Since the early years of the Commune there had always been conspirators in Florence, in the mid-thirteenth century,<sup>8</sup> or the 1350s and 60s for example,<sup>9</sup> who had looked to foreigners for aid, and to their armies in particular. The Pazzi in 1478 had the support of the Pope and Girolamo Riario, as did perhaps the plot of 1481,<sup>10</sup> and the plot of April 1494 involved the Duke of Milan.<sup>11</sup> Yet until the early fifteenth century there had also always been conspiracies, such as that of 1457,<sup>12</sup> which sought to overthrow the regime without foreign support of any kind, relying rather on the forces of exiles, mercenaries, supporters in the city and particularly the masses of the *popolo minuto*. Indeed such plots were common in the thirty years following the Ciompi revolt.<sup>13</sup> What was new after 1494 was the much greater extent to which conspiracy depended on foreign support, and that it had to come from outside Italy, from France and Spain, as a result of which conspiracy was more difficult and more infrequent than it had been a hundred years previously.

As the state became increasingly able through the fifteenth century to defend itself from internal revolt, so the ability to threaten the regime without outside help decreased. The *popolo minuto*, for example, fragmented into small and isolated communities in parishes on the city's periphery, and lost much of its former capacity for city-wide insurrection.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, as foreign support was more essential to obtain, it was more difficult after 1494 to obtain it. For following the French invasion of Italy in 1494, the peninsula became the arena over the next thirty years and beyond for continual contest between France and Spain, and Italy was effectively divided between two great powers. As Giannotti lamented in the 1530s, this made conspiracy more difficult and thus less frequent than it had been in the past, when the greater number of independent states had made it easier for exiles and conspirators to acquire outside help. After 1494 allies and arms had to be sought from only two great

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<sup>8</sup> N. Machiavelli, 'Istorie fiorentine', II, vi, *Opere*, ed. M. Bonfantini (Milan, 1954), pp. 626-7.

<sup>9</sup> G. Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society 1343-1378* (Princeton, 1962), pp. 111-12, 185-7.

<sup>10</sup> Brown, 'Public Opinion', p. 64, n. 8.

<sup>11</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, ed. R. Palmarocchi (Bari, 1931), p. 90.

<sup>12</sup> Cohn, *Labouring Classes*, pp. 161-2.

<sup>13</sup> Brucker, *Civic World*, pp. 56, 69, 71, 90, 100-101, 326-8, 337.

<sup>14</sup> Cohn, *Labouring Classes*, pp. 195-6, 208-9.

powers, and the discontented had to 'wait for the occasion from the movements of those who, as of very great size, are restless and sluggish'.<sup>15</sup>

Sluggish as the foreign powers were after 1494 however, the Italian Wars did at least ensure that there was always a foreign power potentially willing to ally with the discontented to overthrow the regime in Florence. That plots had been less frequent in the Laurentian period than after 1494 was due in large measure to the greater stability in the latter half of the fifteenth century outside the city, on the Italian peninsula. After 1494, as Florence and other Italian states were forced to ally with one of the two great foreign powers in order to preserve their independence, they were always the potential target of assault by the other. Florence was an attractive target too, as Cardinal Soderini urged the French in 1522,<sup>16</sup> and Filippo Valori urged Bourbon in 1527,<sup>17</sup> able to provide valuable financial and military resources, as well as controlling territory of great strategic importance for the conquest or defence of the principle prizes in both Lombardy and the South.<sup>18</sup> More particularly, Florence, unlike Venice, was a traditionally weak military power,<sup>19</sup> and no match for the armies of the Northern monarchies. While alliance with one might protect it from the other, the regime, as it was often warned, was utterly dependent on the fortunes of its ally for its security.<sup>20</sup>

The greater instability in Italy after 1494 and the greater military weakness of Florence relative to the new foreign powers on the peninsula, meant that regimes in Florence were more vulnerable after 1494 than they had been in the past. The Medici were weaker than their ancestors in the fifteenth century had been, Machiavelli

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<sup>15</sup> D. Giannotti, *Repubblica fiorentina*, ed. G. Silvano (Geneva, 1990) p. 96.

<sup>16</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 177<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> F. Valori, 'Ricordi', B.N.F., Manoscritti Panciatichiani, 134, ins. 6, f. 4<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> See the advantages outlined to the French and Spanish monarchs in G. Molini, *Documenti di Storia Italia*, i (Florence, 1836) pp. 144-5: Renzo da Ceri to the King of France, 28 January 1522; *Calendar of Letters, Despatches and State Papers relating to the Negotiations between England and Spain*, ed. P. de Gayangos, IV, i (London, 1877), p. 163: Louis de Paët and Miçer Mai to the Emperor, 11 August 1529.

<sup>19</sup> M. Mallet, 'Preparations for War in Florence and Venice in the late Fifteenth Century', *Florence and Venice: Comparisons and Relations*, i (Florence, 1979), pp. 149-64.

<sup>20</sup> 'Lodovicus Alamannus, Ill.mo. Domino Alberto Pio, Carpeni Principi et Caesareo Oratori, S.D.', ed. R. von Albertini, *Das Florentinische Staatsbewusstsein im Übergang von der Republik zum Prinzipat* (Berne, 1955), p. 376; N. Guicciardini, 'Discorso di Niccolò Guicciardini del modo del procedere della famiglia de' Medici in Firenze et del fine che poteva avere lo stato di quella famiglia', ed. Albertini, *Staatsbewusstsein*, pp. 358-60.

warned the Pope in 1519, since Florence was no longer powerful enough to defend herself.<sup>21</sup> Alessandro de' Pazzi made the same warning to Cardinal Giulio in 1522, explaining that Italian affairs were now unstable where they had been 'balanced' in Lorenzo's day, and that the Cardinal was not as able as Lorenzo had been to change alliances. Thus if the French ever defeated the Medici's Spanish allies, Pazzi warned, 'the regime would be overthrown'.<sup>22</sup> Whenever Florence was abandoned by her ally, the possibility of opponents gaining foreign support for an attempt to overthrow the regime was greatly increased, and without the protection of her ally, any foreign-backed plot could be a very grave threat indeed.

It was in these conditions that the plot of 1497 arose. In February of that year a truce between Florence's ally, France, and the Italian League, removed the main source of Florence's protection against the Pope and his allies.<sup>23</sup> At the end of February, a Gonfalonier was elected who was believed to be sympathetic to the cause of the exiled Piero de' Medici. Lorenzo Tornabuoni and Giannozzo Pucci wrote from Florence to Piero giving him news of the election and urging him to return to the city 'with the favour of the League'.<sup>24</sup> By 10 March, Tornabuoni later confessed, Piero had replied that he could have the League's 'help' and 'favour' to enter Florence, but preferred to do so 'by means of the *Signoria*' with the League's consent, and to raise his own arms with the financial help, six thousand ducats, of his supporters in the city.<sup>25</sup>

As Tornabuoni's examination testifies, the plotters considered it 'very dangerous' to proceed if Piero did not have the 'support' (*le spalle*) of Milan. Some days later they received assurances from Piero that he would come with 'great favour of the League' and would have the 'help' of Milan and the 'support of all the League', which would be confirmed by a papal agent who would come to speak 'in public, in

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<sup>21</sup> N. Machiavelli, 'Discursus florentinarum rerum post mortem iunioris Laurentii Medices', *Tutte le opere* (Italy, 1813), iv, p. 109.

<sup>22</sup> A. Pazzi, 'Discorso di Alessandro de' Pazzi al Cardinale Giulio de' Medici anno 1522', ed. G. Capponi, *A.S.I.*, Ser. I, i (1842), pp. 426-7.

<sup>23</sup> P. Parenti, 'Storia fiorentina', partly ed., J. Schnitzer, *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte Savonarolas*, iv (Leipzig, 1910), p. 163.

<sup>24</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 139.

<sup>25</sup> A.S.F., C. Stroz., Ser. I, 360, ff. 11<sup>v</sup>, 12<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Lorenzo Tornabuoni. This is part of a copy, first possessed by Francesco Guicciardini, of the original examinations of Giovanni Cambi, Niccolò Ridolfi, and Giannozzo Pucci, as well as Tornabuoni.

favour of Piero' and his readmission to the city. The agent did not come, which cooled their hopes, Tornabuoni confessed.<sup>26</sup> He and Pucci sent word to Piero that 'this was the time for him, having the favour of League and being both the Gonfalonier and the *Signoria* suitable to his purpose'. Messer Agnolo da Tiboli, an agent of the Orsini, came from Rome with assurances that 'Piero would come with the favour of the League'.<sup>27</sup> This was the assurance they needed, although Tiboli reported back that Bernardo del Nero, the Gonfalonier, professed that whilst he would always be a 'good friend' of the Medici, he believed that more time was needed with regard to the situation within the city.<sup>28</sup> Del Nero's reply to Piero's requests for support, Tornabuoni confessed, was that 'Piero was reckoning without the host'.<sup>29</sup>

Yet for Pucci, Tornabuoni, and the others involved, the League's support was clearly crucial to the conspiracy, a fact ignored in the only modern account of the plot,<sup>30</sup> and it was the opportunity they had been waiting for since Piero had been expelled three years earlier. Tornabuoni confessed for example, that in the summer of 1496 he and Pucci had discussed with another future conspirator, Jacopo Gianfigliuzzi, the possibility that Piero might return with the help of the imperial attack on Tuscany. The Emperor, it turned out, favoured the overthrow of the regime but not the return of the Medici, and his expedition was a failure.<sup>31</sup> In both the summer and winter of 1496 Piero had been in contact with Pucci, Niccolò Ridolfi and the other eventual leaders of the plot to request support for possible attempts to return to the city,<sup>32</sup> and they resolutely insisted, as their examinations show, that he would have to gain the favour and support of the League, and especially of Milan, if he was to overthrow the regime.<sup>33</sup> Del Nero, Piero was told, was ready to support his

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<sup>26</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, ff. 12<sup>r</sup>, 17<sup>v</sup>-18<sup>v</sup>: Examinations of Lorenzo Tornabuoni and Giannozzo Pucci.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., f. 12<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> 'Processo di Lamberto dell' Antella', ed. P. Villari, *La storia di Girolamo Savonarola e de' suoi tempi* (Florence, 1888), ii, p. xiii.

<sup>29</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 13<sup>r</sup>: 'Piero contava senza l' hoste'; Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 212.

<sup>30</sup> Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, pp. 7-9, 12-14.

<sup>31</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 12<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., f. 13<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Niccolò Ridolfi. Ridolfi confessed that he had discussed Piero's request in December with Bernardo del Nero, Andrea de' Medici (el Bucti), Giovanni Cambi, Gino Capponi, Pandolfo Corbinelli, Piero Pitti and Francesco Martelli.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., ff. 13<sup>v</sup>, 16<sup>r-v</sup>, 17<sup>r-v</sup>: Examinations of Niccolò Ridolfi and Giannozzo Pucci.



return when the League 'gave its consent'.<sup>34</sup> Lorenzo Tornabuoni confessed that his 'faith in the power of the League' had persuaded him that Piero could return 'without scandal'.<sup>35</sup>

Piero failed in the end to get as many forces as he wanted from the Venetians, and no help at all was forthcoming from Milan. This seems to have been one reason why during his approach to the city he sought to appeal to the discontent of the 'popolo minuto' in a time of great dearth,<sup>36</sup> encouraged that on account of their hunger the 'starving populace (*plebe*)' and peasants desired the overthrow of the regime, and hoping that on his approach to the city gates the 'multitude' would rise up and recall him.<sup>37</sup> Piero's plan to exploit the hunger in the countryside and the city was 'not a bad design', according to Parenti, and as he entered Florentine territory Piero successfully called on the *contadini* to join him, distributing bread and promising to put grain at a low price.<sup>38</sup> The lower orders, when hungry, were evidently still perceived as a useful and malleable political force in the early sixteenth century, but it is quite clear that neither Piero nor the conspirators within the city would ever contemplated going ahead with the plot without the far more crucial foreign support.

Although Piero succeeded in bringing troops to the walls of the city on 28 April 1497, he had to withdraw the same day, as the conspirators inside failed to make the promised move to open the gates to his forces.<sup>39</sup> As the accounts of Adriani, Parenti, Guicciardini and other contemporaries make clear, this was because Piero was late, delayed by bad weather, and the conspirators would make no move without him. By the time Piero did arrive, a new *Signoria* had been elected composed of his 'enemies', the gates of the city were secured, and a number of citizens who were 'suspect' (*sospetto*), on account of their support for the former Medici regime, were

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., f. 16<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., f. 12<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 132, 138; Idem, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. C. Panigada (Bari, 1929), i, p. 283.

<sup>37</sup> Parenti, "Storia", ed. Schnitzer, p. 179; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 138.

<sup>38</sup> Parenti, "Storia", ed. Schnitzer, p. 181; M. Sanudo, *Diarii* (Venice, 1879-1902), i, col. 613.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

detained in the Palace as a security measure.<sup>40</sup> Amongst those fifty or so ‘supporters’ of Piero detained, were at least three of the four main leaders of the plot, Pucci, Ridolfi, and Lorenzo Tornabuoni as well as their most prominent accomplices, Filippo dell’ Antella, Piero Alamanni, Piero Tornabuoni and Francesco Martelli.<sup>41</sup> If Piero had not been late, there would have been no ‘remedy’ according to Cerretani, and there was no doubt in Parenti’s mind that ‘the greatest disorder’ would have resulted.<sup>42</sup>

Piero himself blamed his failure on the meagre response of the League to his requests for ‘help and favour’, which had deprived the expedition of the financial and military resources that the ‘opportune’ quality of the ‘occasion’ demanded.<sup>43</sup> Milan had given no more than its consent to the expedition,<sup>44</sup> and in its aftermath Piero sought to secure Milanese help for the future. If the next ‘occasion’, Piero informed the Duke, was accompanied by his ‘auspices and authority’, Piero had no doubt that his every ‘design and desire’ would succeed.<sup>45</sup> The conspirators in Florence agreed, and thus when news reached them in June 1497 that the Duke of Milan was wanting to send a force to help Piero return to the city, Antella, Martelli, Sforza Bettini and other plotters greeted it with confidence that Piero would therefore ‘undoubtedly’ return.<sup>46</sup> Piero Alamanni was reported to be ‘in firm hope of Piero’s return, because one saw the wish of the League to be this’ and because ‘much smaller forces than the League would make such effect’.<sup>47</sup> Tornabuoni, according to Ridolfi’s confession, declared himself ready ‘to give his life and property’, if the Duke of Milan was willing to use his forces to overthrow the regime.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Parenti, ‘Storia’, ed. Schnitzer, pp. 179-81; B. Masi, *Ricordanze di Bartolomeo Masi calderaio fiorentino dal 1478 al 1526*, ed. G. Corazzini (Florence 1906), p. 34; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 132-3; Idem, *Storia d’ Italia*, i, p. 285; B. Cerretani, *Storia fiorentina*, ed. G. Berti (Florence, 1994), pp. 234-5; J. Nardi, *Istorie della città di Firenze*, ed. L. Arbib (Florence, 1842), i, pp. 116-18. For Adriani’s account see ‘Frammenti storici’, in *Opere minori di Niccolò Machiavelli*, ed. F. Polidori (Florence, 1852), pp. 78-9. These ‘fragments’ are now commonly attributed to Marcello Virgilio Adriani. See G. Mocchi, ‘Marcello Adriani’, *D.B.I.* (Rome, 1960-), i, pp. 310-1.

<sup>41</sup> Parenti, ‘Storia’, ed. Schnitzer, p. 181; Vaglianti, *Storia*, p. 42.

<sup>42</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 235; Parenti, ‘Storia’, ed. Schnitzer, p. 181.

<sup>43</sup> G. Moncallero, *Il Cardinale Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena: umanista e diplomatico 1470-1520* (Florence, 1953), p. 174.

<sup>44</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 138; Idem, *Storia d’ Italia*, i, p. 284.

<sup>45</sup> Moncallero, *Bernardo Dovizi*, p. 174.

<sup>46</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, ff. 11<sup>r</sup>, 13<sup>v</sup>: Examinations of Giovanni Cambi and Niccolò Ridolfi.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 11<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>48</sup> Cei, ‘Storia’, f. 50<sup>r</sup>.

The dependence of conspiracy on foreign support was illustrated again in 1510, when Florence found herself caught up in a war between her ally, France, and the Pope. Guicciardini later recounted how the Pope blamed Soderini for Florence's refusal to join the League against France, and was particularly angered when the Florentines cancelled a truce with the Sieneese at the request of the French, and despatched two hundred men-at-arms to them towards the end of November.<sup>49</sup> Thus the Pope had encouraged, by means of Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici, a plot with Marcantonio Colonna, the *condottiere*, and some young Florentines to have Soderini killed.<sup>50</sup>

Prinzivalle della Stufa was the only Florentine, besides the Cardinal,<sup>51</sup> found to have been involved in the plot, hatched in Bologna in November, according to the *Otto*.<sup>52</sup> Della Stufa is reported to have told Filippo Strozzi, during an unsuccessful attempt to recruit him, how he had been moved by the Pope, through Colonna in one account,<sup>53</sup> the Cardinal in another,<sup>54</sup> to attempt to overthrow the regime and readmit the Medici to the city. To that end he had been assured of all papal support in terms of men and money and that, to have 'comfort', soldiers would be amassed at the confines of Florentine territory from where they could be led to the city in a matter of hours.<sup>55</sup> Colonna was to send eight or so 'capable men' for the assassination of the Gonfalonier, whom della Stufa would shelter.<sup>56</sup> It would be an 'easy' enterprise, della Stufa reportedly told Strozzi, since the Gonfalonier was accustomed to go about the

<sup>49</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 63; B. Cerretani, *Ricordi*, ed. G. Berti (Florence, 1993), p. 230.

<sup>50</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 63. See also Sanudo, *Diarii*, xi, col. 109.

<sup>51</sup> A formal protest was made to the Pope concerning the Cardinal's involvement. A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 36, f. 14<sup>r</sup>: Dieci to Pierfrancesco Tosinghi, 24 December 1510; *Ibid.*, Responsive, 102, f. 458<sup>r</sup>: Letter of Pierfrancesco Tosinghi, 25 December 1510; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xi, col. 713.

<sup>52</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 148, f. 266<sup>v</sup> (31 December 1510).

<sup>53</sup> L. Strozzi, 'Vita di Filippo Strozzi' in G.-B. Niccolini, *Filippo Strozzi, tragedia* (Florence, 1847), p. xxvi.

<sup>54</sup> A.S.Mo., Canc. Duc., Firenze, 11 (unfoliated): Francesco dall' Oglio to Duke, 23 December 1510.

<sup>55</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', p. xxvi.

<sup>56</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 36, ff. 11<sup>r</sup>, 12<sup>v</sup>, 16<sup>v</sup>: Letters of 23 and 29 December 1510; A.S.Mo., Canc. Duc., Firenze, 11 (unfoliated): Francesco dall' Oglio to the Duke, 23 December 1510; Anonymous, 'Diario storico di quello che è seguito nella città di Firenze, cominciato l' anno 1435, finito nell' anno 1522', A.S.F., Manoscritti, 117, f. 88<sup>r</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 230; *Idem*, *Storia*, p. 398; G. Cambi, *Istorie fiorentine*, ed. I. di San Luigi, *Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, xxi (Florence, 1785), p. 244.

city on certain feast days without any guard, and one could equally safely occupy a gate of the city to admit troops despatched for the purpose by the Pope.<sup>57</sup>

The extent of the Pope's involvement has not been emphasized in recent accounts.<sup>58</sup> Rather, attention has been drawn to instructions from the *Dieci* to the Florentine ambassador in Rome after the plot's discovery,<sup>59</sup> asking him to inform the Pope that although della Stufa claimed to have papal support, they did not believe he was involved.<sup>60</sup> However, previous to this the *Dieci* had informed this same ambassador, as well as others in France and elsewhere, that the plot had been devised with the 'consent and desire' of the Pope, as well as the Cardinal de' Medici and Colonna.<sup>61</sup> Indeed the ambassador to France was informed that the Pope, angered by the despatch of Florentine troops to the French, had instigated the conspiracy and 'summoned' and 'encouraged' the others to take part.<sup>62</sup> The Pope had vigorously objected to Florentine accusations of his involvement being made in the courts of France and elsewhere,<sup>63</sup> and the *Dieci* noted that the disposition of the Pope towards Florence had 'very much worsened than it was ... since he has understood himself to be blamed for the design made here'.<sup>64</sup>

The *Dieci* had clearly affected to change its mind in order not to offend the Pope to the extent that a resolution of the conflict that had produced the plot would no longer be possible, and the *Otto* thought it better not to name those 'most powerful foreigners' it condemned della Stufa for conspiring with.<sup>65</sup> Meanwhile, to its ambassadors in France and elsewhere, the *Dieci* refuted the denials coming from Bologna,<sup>66</sup> and Soderini alluded to the Pope's involvement in a speech to the Great

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<sup>57</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', p. xxvii.

<sup>58</sup> S. Bertelli, 'Pier Soderini "Vexillifer Perpetuus Reipublicae Florentinae", 1502-1512', *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Hans Baron*, ed. A. Molho and J. Tedeschi (Florence, 1971), pp. 354-5; M. Bullard, *Filippo Strozzi and the Medici* (Cambridge, 1980), pp. 61-2.

<sup>59</sup> Butters, *Governors*, p. 143.

<sup>60</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 36, ff. 14<sup>r-v</sup>, 23<sup>r-v</sup>: Letters of 24, 28 December 1510, 1 January 1511; *Ibid.*, Responsive, 102, f. 459<sup>r</sup>: Pierfrancesco Tosinighi to the Dieci, 25 December 1510.

<sup>61</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 36, ff. 9<sup>r</sup>, 11<sup>r-v</sup>: Letters of 23 December 1510.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 36, ff. 12<sup>r-v</sup>: Dieci to Roberto Acciaiuoli, 23 December 1510.

<sup>63</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Responsive., 102, f. 455<sup>r</sup>: Pierfrancesco Tosinighi to the Dieci, 24 December 1510, P. Parenti, 'Storia fiorentina', B.N.F., F.P., II, IV, 171, f. 46<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>64</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 36, f. 26<sup>f</sup>: Dieci to Francesco Pandolfini, 3 January 1511.

<sup>65</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 148, f. 266<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>66</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 36, ff. 16<sup>v</sup>, 17<sup>v</sup>: Letters of 29 December 1510; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 232.

Council.<sup>67</sup> No contemporary doubted that the Pope was not only involved but had also instigated the plot. One account reports that della Stufa, knowing the Pope to be ill-disposed towards Soderini, offered his services, and accepted a request to take part in an attempt to overthrow the regime.<sup>68</sup> The plot clearly depended completely on papal support, and would not have occurred without it.

As in 1497, the conspiracy of 1510 had been able to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the popular regime's dogged adherence to the French alliance, and it was that same allegiance that provided the opportunity for the conspiracy against Soderini in 1512. One of its leaders, Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, later admitted that if an accord had been reached with the Viceroy, the regime would not have been overthrown.<sup>69</sup> Recent accounts of Soderini's overthrow have focused mainly on the failure of the regime to accord with the Viceroy and the League, rather than the coup itself, and the relationship between the two remains to be examined.<sup>70</sup> It becomes clear that without the supporting presence of the Spanish army, not only would the coup have failed, it would never have been attempted. As Giannotti later wrote, the 'reason' for Soderini's overthrow was the discontent of some 'wicked and ambitious' citizens, the 'occasion' for it was the conflict between the Pope and France, and the eclipse of French power in Italy, and its 'beginning' was the Spanish assault on Florence to readmit the Medici.<sup>71</sup> That it succeeded where the two earlier attempts had failed was partly because it was not uncovered as was the plot of 1510, and that most of its leaders were not amongst those detained as a security measure as they were in 1497. Yet it was also because their foreign support, a Spanish army, was strong enough, whereas that in 1497 had not been, to paralyse the city in fear, and to deter potential resistance to the coup.

After the defeat of the French in June 1512, Florence was isolated against the mainly Spanish forces of the Holy League. In mid-August the League adopted the decision to attack Florence, depose Soderini, and restore the Medici as private citizens. This was thanks to Giuliano de' Medici's promises of a huge sum to the

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<sup>67</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 247.

<sup>68</sup> Anon., 'Diario istorico', f. 88<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>69</sup> A.S.F., C.P., 71, f. 50<sup>v</sup> (July 1529).

<sup>70</sup> Pesman Cooper, 'Caduta', pp. 227-255; Butters, *Governors*, pp. 157-64.

<sup>71</sup> Giannotti, *Repubblica fiorentina*, p. 94.

Spanish Viceroy for their return to the city, with 10,000 scudi to be paid immediately, which was only provided, according to Cerretani, with the financial help of Florentine citizens.<sup>72</sup> By this time, according to Guicciardini, Paolo Vettori, Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, Bartolomeo Valori and others had been conspiring with the Medici, for 'some months'.<sup>73</sup> Other accounts add Giovanni and Palla di Bernardo Rucellai,<sup>74</sup> as well as Gino Capponi.<sup>75</sup> Whether the funds for Giuliano came from them is not known, although accounts of the bankruptcy of Valori, Vettori and the other young men who led the overthrow of Soderini, which must be treated with some caution as we shall see, have been used as the basis for suggestions that others must have provided the funds.<sup>76</sup>

Whatever the truth of the matter, what is clear is that the conspirators were depending on the support of the League, and had been waiting for some time for the opportunity to plot against the regime with outside help. Cerretani later argued that Giovanni Rucellai and the others had been part of a group of discontented which included *Palleschi* and opponents of Soderini who since at least the Strozzi-Medici marriage alliance of 1508 had been 'waiting for the occasion' to overthrow Soderini, meeting and discussing how the Medici could be readmitted to the city, or Giuliano and a force conducted there, the Palace seized and Soderini killed.<sup>77</sup> Certainly by 1508, as we shall see, most if not all the conspirators were well-known opponents of the Gonfalonier, had openly consorted with the Medici in Rome, and were suspected of involvement in the Strozzi marriage and of wishing to overthrow the regime. The Rucellai were even suspected of having already attempted to do so.

Guicciardini recorded that when Giovanni's father, Bernardo, left the city in 1506, it was the opinion of some, perhaps of the 'most wise', that on account of his discontent with the Gonfalonier, Bernardo had discussed the overthrow of the regime with the Medici or Pandolfo Petrucci, for which Giovanni, of 'similar mind and ways'

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<sup>72</sup> B. Cerretani, *Dialogo della mutazione di Firenze*, ed. R. Mordenti (Florence, 1990), p. 44; Idem, *Storia*, pp. 435-6.

<sup>73</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 231.

<sup>74</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', p. xxix; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 13.

<sup>75</sup> 'Raccolto delle azioni di Francesco e Pagolo Vettori', ed. A. von Reumont, *A.S.I.*, Ser. 1, appendix vi (1848), p. 268.

<sup>76</sup> Butters, *Governors*, p. 167.

<sup>77</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 42.

to his father, had secretly travelled on many occasions to Rome.<sup>78</sup> These discussions were believed by the 'wise' to have resulted in the expedition of Bartolomeo d' Alviano into Tuscany in August 1505.<sup>79</sup> This had taken place with the express intention of restoring the Medici to the city, and the involvement of Florentines in the city seems to have been suspected at the time.<sup>80</sup> Bernardo's departure, having already sent Giovanni to Venice some months before, was said to have been because he feared he might be tried by the *Quarantia* on that account.<sup>81</sup>

The sum of all this suspicion is the possibility, as some historians have recognized, that those who overthrew Soderini in 1512 had been hoping and even working towards that end since 1505.<sup>82</sup> If so, it serves to emphasize just how important foreign support was to the conspirators, in that they were prepared to wait so long for outside help, rather than proceed without it. To procure that help they were amongst those citizens who sought, according to Cerretani, to demonstrate to the envoy of the League, Lorenzo Pucci, on his visit to Florence in July, that the city desired the return of the Medici.<sup>83</sup> The plan seems to have been, according to Machiavelli, that as soon as the Spanish army entered the Florentine dominion, the conspirators in the city would seize arms in their favour.<sup>84</sup> The Viceroy reached Prato on 28 August expecting a move in Florence in favour of the Medici, as he had been promised, according to Nerli, by Valori, Vettori, Albizzi, the Rucellai, and 'all that school of the garden of Bernardo Rucellai'.<sup>85</sup> No move occurred, probably because, as Cerretani suggests, both Giovanni and Palla Rucellai, together with their father, Bernardo, and two of their closest associates from the gardens, Francesco da Diacceto and Giovanni Corsi, were amongst those detained in the Palace on 28 August as 'suspecti'.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 283.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 325.

<sup>80</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', B.N.F., F.P., II II 134, ff. 65<sup>v</sup>-6<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>81</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 283, 325.

<sup>82</sup> R. Pesman Cooper, 'Pier Soderini: Aspiring Prince or Civic Leader?', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, New Ser., i (1978), pp. 108-9; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 59-60.

<sup>83</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 43; *Idem*, *Storia*, p. 434.

<sup>84</sup> Machiavelli, 'Discorsi', II xxvii, *Opere* (1954), p. 294.

<sup>85</sup> F. Nerli, *Commentari de' fatti civili occorsi dentro la città di Firenze dall' anno MCCXV al MDXXXVII* (Augusta, 1728), p. 107.

<sup>86</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 45; *Idem*, *Ricordi*, p. 277.

Vettori, Valori and Albizzi were not amongst those detained, and if they had temporarily lost their nerve, it was the sack of Prato on 29 August that restored it. On 3 September Jacopo Guicciardini recalled the fear in Florence after the sack of the 'manifest danger' the city was in, for which Soderini alone was blamed, and recorded how amongst the 'popolo' it was said that the Viceroy's demands should be met, rather than endanger the 'popolo' to save one man alone. As both the 'fear' of the sack and 'open' criticism of the Gonfalonier amongst the 'popolo' increased, Guicciardini recalled, the conspirators struck.<sup>87</sup>

Soderini was being blamed throughout the city, yet on the day before the coup the Council of Eighty demonstrated its support by instructing orators to the Viceroy to reject demands for the Gonfalonier's deposition, and to agree only to the return of the Medici.<sup>88</sup> The conspirators are recorded to have told Soderini that he should no longer 'hold the city in danger of going to the sack, as Prato',<sup>89</sup> but it was probably their fear that the Viceroy would not insist on the Gonfalonier's removal in order to come to an accord which prompted them to act. Indeed, as Bernardo Dovizi recalled a few days later, the Viceroy was drawing up terms of an accord with the Florentine orators and arranging a marriage alliance between the Soderini and Medici families to cement it, when Giovanni Rucellai rushed to the Medici with news of the coup, to notify them to agree to nothing further.<sup>90</sup>

As contemporaries recognized, it was the 'terror' and 'stunned dismay' that filled Florence following the sack,<sup>91</sup> the 'common fear of everyone' and 'seeing that no one was about to stop them',<sup>92</sup> that encouraged Albizzi, Valori and Vettori,<sup>93</sup> with

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<sup>87</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 29<sup>r</sup>: Jacopo Guicciardini to Francesco Guicciardini, 3 September, 1512.

<sup>88</sup> A.S.Mo., Canc. Duc., Firenze, 11 (unfoliated): Pierantonio Torello to the Duke, 29 August 1512; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 279.

<sup>89</sup> F. Vettori, 'Sommario della storia d' Italia dal 1511 al 1527', ed. A von Reumont, *A.S.I.*, Ser. 1, appendix vi (1848), p. 292; 'Raccolto delle azioni', p. 269.

<sup>90</sup> B. Dovizi, *Epistolario di Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena*, ed., G. Moncallero (Florence, 1955) i, p. 509; Pesman Cooper, 'Pier Soderini', p. 123.

<sup>91</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 231; Strozz, 'Vita', p. xxx.

<sup>92</sup> N. Guicciardini, 'Discorso', p. 354.

<sup>93</sup> Anonymous, 'Ricordi di storia fiorentina, 1493-1512', B.N.F., F.P., II, II, 339, f. 5<sup>v</sup>; F. Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', B.N.F., Fondo Baldovinetti, Ms. 244, f. 156<sup>r</sup>; Anon. 'Diario storico', f. 94<sup>v</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 279; F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 231.



Gino Capponi,<sup>94</sup> to lead an armed group to the Palace on 31 August and force Soderini to leave it, threatening him with defenestration according to one account,<sup>95</sup> and giving him the 'mad sack'.<sup>96</sup> They were no more than thirty in number,<sup>97</sup> and that the leaders and their 'few companions' met with 'no resistance', and were allowed 'almost disarmed' to remove the Gonfalonier 'without any defence' being made, according to Nerli and Francesco Guicciardini, was because the Gonfalonier, in the aftermath of the sack, had lost his nerve.<sup>98</sup>

Soderini neither offered nor inspired any resistance to the conspirators, and indeed was more than willing to leave office, and this, as has recently been recognized, was a major reason for the ease with which the coup succeeded.<sup>99</sup> But it was also, as Buonaccorsi knew, because the city was 'stunned and terrified',<sup>100</sup> and the fear of the Spanish army and the sack so effectively deterred resistance to the conspirators that as Francesco Vettori recalled, it was more responsible for the return of the Medici than any of the actions of their supporters.<sup>101</sup>

It was fear of that same Spanish army which allowed the forcing of the *parlamento* on 16 September 1512 to be achieved with equal facility, without any 'resistance', as contemporaries remarked.<sup>102</sup> Just as significantly, like the 31 August it was only because of the supporting presence of the Spanish army that the *parlamento* was attempted at all, and it is this aspect in particular that has received little emphasis in modern accounts.<sup>103</sup> Yet it is in connection with the *parlamento* that we find one of the clearest statements of the importance of foreign support to conspiracy. On 15

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<sup>94</sup> 'Raccolto delle azioni', p. 268; Vettori, 'Sommario', p. 292; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 109; B. Segni, 'Vita di Niccolò Capponi', in *Storie fiorentine*, (Milan, 1805), iii, p. 285. Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 497 is the only account to give the full Gino di Neri Capponi. I have found no evidence to support the assertion of Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. 62, that it was Gino di Piero Capponi who took part. R. Goldthwaite found no evidence that a Gino di Piero Capponi ever existed, *Private Wealth in Renaissance Florence* (Princeton, 1968), p. 213.

<sup>95</sup> Anon., 'Ricordi', f. 5<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>96</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. III, 178, f. 67<sup>r</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Lorenzo Strozzi, 2 September 1512.

<sup>97</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 497.

<sup>98</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 109; F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, pp. 231-2.

<sup>99</sup> Pesman Cooper, 'Pier Soderini', pp. 124-5; Eadem, 'Caduta', pp. 253, 257.

<sup>100</sup> B. Buonaccorsi, *Diario di successi più importanti seguiti in Italia 1498-1512* (Florence, 1568), p. 183.

<sup>101</sup> Vettori, 'Sommario', p. 291; 'Raccolto delle azioni', p. 269.

<sup>102</sup> L. Landucci, *Diario fiorentino dal 1450 al 1516*, ed. I del Badia (Florence, 1883), p. 329.

<sup>103</sup> The matter is referred to briefly in Stephens, *Fall*, p. 62; Butters, *Governors*, p. 182.

September Bernardo Dovizi wrote to Giulio de' Medici on behalf of his 'true friends' in Florence urging the Medici to force a *parlamento*. 'You have abroad as much favour as you wish', he wrote, 'and affairs inside Florence are always made with the favour of abroad'.<sup>104</sup>

As Cerretani makes clear, those pressing the Medici for a *parlamento* believed, as they informed Cardinal Giovanni on 9 September, that although they were few there would be no 'difficulty' overthrowing the regime. The *Signoria* was 'united' to their purpose, and more importantly, the 'readiness' of the Marquis of Palude, Ramazotto, Rinieri della Sassetta, and 'other friends' amongst the captains in the service of the League was such that 'the matter is done, so much is the general fear'.<sup>105</sup> The partisan supporters of the Medici had been busily cultivating that fear themselves. On their instructions the Marquis della Palude, one of the Viceroy's captains, and Ramazzotto, a captain in the service of the Medici, told supporters of the Grand Council visiting the Cardinal that the Medici would burn, sack and kill if they were not 'secure and content', and that the Spanish army was wanting to commit 'every evil' that the laws of war permitted.<sup>106</sup> It was the partisans, according to Cerretani, who arranged for some Spanish soldiers to ride around the city walls as if surveying for a possible sack of the city.<sup>107</sup> As such activities illustrate, the partisans wanted to use the protective presence of the Spanish army in any attempted coup. Thus the Viceroy's consent would be necessary.<sup>108</sup>

The Viceroy, like the Medici, had given his support to the reforms of 7 September whereby the Great Council was maintained, the Council of Eighty reformed, the term of the Gonfalonier reduced to one year and the position of the Medici established as that of private citizens. Both Giuliano and the Viceroy's representative had spoken on the reform's behalf before it was voted on by the Great Council.<sup>109</sup> On 11 September the Viceroy sent word to the *Signoria* assuring them that he had no wish to overthrow the government, and urging them to attend to the

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<sup>104</sup> Dovizi, *Epistolario*, i, p. 505.

<sup>105</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 53.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 52-3.

<sup>107</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 283; *Idem*, *Dialogo*, p. 54.

<sup>108</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 234.

<sup>109</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 281.

city's financial obligations to him so that he could depart as soon as possible.<sup>110</sup> This display of reluctance by the Spanish to serve their cause made the partisans wanting a *parlamento* fearful, according to Cerretani.<sup>111</sup> But over the next two or three days, Cerretani recalled, the partisans galvanized the Viceroy's support,<sup>112</sup> persuading him, according to Guicciardini, that since the new regime could not be trusted as a loyal ally of the League, and that there was a danger that Soderini would be recalled once the army of the League had departed, the good of the League lay in a regime in which the security and benefit of the Medici were assured.<sup>113</sup> On the night of 15 September the Viceroy signalled to Cardinal Giovanni his consent to a *parlamento*, informing him of his imminent departure for Lombardy so that if the Cardinal needed their presence 'he should not delay'.<sup>114</sup>

This was what the partisans had been waiting for, and moreover, as Cerretani makes clear, it was the Viceroy's message that was crucial in persuading the previously reluctant Cardinal to force the *parlamento*, which occurred the next day.<sup>115</sup> The Medici decided to force a *parlamento*, Baldovinetti recalled, 'having the Spanish close to the city' to be conducted inside to aid the undertaking if need be, and they clearly would not have gone ahead without them.<sup>116</sup> It was above all the fear of the Spanish that deterred resistance to the coup and ensured its success. Cerretani recorded how in order to discourage opponents during the forcing of the *parlamento*, partisans of the Medici had spread the rumour that six thousand Spanish soldiers were approaching the city in favour of the Medici, and while 'no opposition' had been raised by that point, the rumour extinguished any 'spark' or 'doubt'.<sup>117</sup> Baldovinetti recalled that the *parlamento* had been held 'without any scandal' and with 'few persons', because everyone shut themselves up in their houses and the Spanish 'were

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 284.

<sup>111</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 55.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>113</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 234.

<sup>114</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 286.

<sup>115</sup> Idem, *Dialogo*, pp. 56, 57; Idem, *Storia*, p. 447.

<sup>116</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 156<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>117</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 449; Idem, *Dialogo*, pp. 58-9.

armed and organized to come to Florence in aid of the Medici if anyone had wanted to impede them'.<sup>118</sup>

The crucial role of foreign support in all the conspiracies against the popular regime of 1494 to 1512 reveals the extent to which the internal security of the regime depended above all on its ability to defend itself from external military threat. Its greatest failures were diplomatic ones, and its greatest weakness its military incapacity in the face of the armies of the new powers in Italy after 1494. Yet the dependence of all the conspiracies on foreign support also testify to the internal strength of the popular regime, and to the weakness of its opponents within the city. Their greatest strength, and the cause of their easy success in the overthrow of Soderini, and later the *parlamento*, was not popular discontent, but popular fear.

Where the popular regime had been overthrown only by force of foreign arms, the first plot against the Medici, uncovered in 1513, had no plans to use foreign arms at all, relying rather on popular discontent. This is a stark illustration of the unpopularity of the Medici regime, but that was not by itself enough to encourage the plot. For the conspirators seem to have been depending on events abroad, that threatened to remove the protection afforded to the regime by its foreign allies. This has been completely ignored in modern accounts of the plot.<sup>119</sup> Yet the conspiracy provides the clearest evidence of the extent to which the Medicean regime, having come to power in 1512 in the face of popular hostility only by the force of foreign arms, was then depending upon the protection of foreign arms for its internal security.

Throughout the winter of 1512/13 the Pope was hoping to undermine Spanish power in Italy, and the position of the Medici, their allies, in Florence. Thus to encourage the discontented in the city, according to Cerretani, the Pope requested Spain to lift its protection from Florence, and had Cosimo de' Pazzi, Archbishop of the city and a vocal opponent of the Medici, understand that he wanted to make him a Cardinal.<sup>120</sup> The plot of Pietropaolo Boscoli and Agostino Capponi may well have been encouraged by these developments, as Pitti argued.<sup>121</sup> For while uncovered in

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<sup>118</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 157<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>119</sup> Butters, *Governors*, pp. 210-11; R. Ridolfi, *The Life of Niccolò Machiavelli*, trans. C. Grayson (London, 1963), p. 135; P. Villari, *Niccolò Machiavelli e suoi tempi* (Milan 1895), ii, pp. 198-204.

<sup>120</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 73; F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 239.

<sup>121</sup> Pitti, 'Istoria', pp. 108-9.

February 1513, it was first hatched, as the condemnation by the *Otto* makes clear, in November of 1512.<sup>122</sup>

Moreover, Pazzi and Boscoli were close friends,<sup>123</sup> and Pazzi may even have been deeply involved in the plot. Niccolò Valori confessed that knowing that the Archbishop was a 'very close friend' of Boscoli, he had asked Pazzi to dissuade Boscoli from his plans,<sup>124</sup> and Pazzi was blamed for not having reported Boscoli to the authorities.<sup>125</sup> Pazzi's involvement however, may have been deeper than this. According to Cerretani, the Archbishop 'knew of and consented to' the plot, and an examination of one of those condemned which revealed him to be 'smeared' and 'culpable', was torn up on his death in April 1513.<sup>126</sup>

Whatever hopes had been pinned on the Pope however, his illness intervened. Yet thereafter the conspirators seem to have been encouraged by the belief, widespread in Florence, that the Pope's imminent death would be followed by a French threat to the city, and that the League which protected the regime would soon dissolve.<sup>127</sup> The examinations of Pandolfo Biliotti and Giovanni Folchi reveal that those close to Boscoli and Capponi discussed the 'progress of the illness of the Pope' and certainly believed that the French were 'strong', that the League 'could not continue as it was and that it would easily dissolve one day', and would do so 'if this Pope dies'.<sup>128</sup> It was probably these same beliefs that informed Capponi's remark to Biliotti that 'matters were going well both inside and out',<sup>129</sup> and explain why Boscoli, as Valori recorded, certainly saw the plot as a response to the Pope's impending death.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 155, f. 36<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>123</sup> G. Busini, *Lettere di Giovambattista Busini a Benedetto Varchi sopra l'assedio di Firenze*, ed. G. Milanese (Florence, 1860), p. 95.

<sup>124</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', B.N.F., Manoscritti Panciatichiani, 134, f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>125</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 300; Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 76; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 5; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 123.

<sup>126</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 80; Idem, *Ricordi*, p. 303.

<sup>127</sup> Pitti, 'Istoria', p. 109.

<sup>128</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., XCVII, n. 269: Examination of Pandolfo Biliotti; Ibid., LXXXIX, n. 38: Examination of Giovanni Folchi. Folchi's examination has been published in J. N. Stephens and H. C. Butters, 'New light on Machiavelli', *English Historical Review*, xcvi (1982), p. 67.

<sup>129</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., XCVII, n. 269.

<sup>130</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

The conspirators planned to kill Giuliano, Lorenzo, and Giulio,<sup>131</sup> and seize the Palace.<sup>132</sup> The belief that it would be followed by a French threat to the city, and the dissolution of the League that protected the regime was one reason why the conspirators planned, as they did, to strike after the death of the Pope, but it was not the only one. According to both the *Dieci* and Giuliano,<sup>133</sup> as well as some contemporary chroniclers,<sup>134</sup> the conspirators planned to move not only after the Pope's death, but after the Cardinal, as was 'necessary', had left the city to attend the consequent conclave. With the absence of the Cardinal from the city, the conspirators clearly believed, as the *Dieci* wrote, 'to find affairs here weak, and suitable to their malicious plans'.<sup>135</sup>

Thus according to the conspirators the two main pillars upon which the security of the Medici regime depended were the protection of the Spanish and the presence of the Cardinal, which once removed would allow the regime to be toppled, and they were not far wrong to believe so. Giuliano may have sought to impress upon the Venetians that the plot was of no danger to the regime, even if the assassinations had succeeded,<sup>136</sup> but members of the regime had certainly been fearful that if the Pope's death were followed by a long conclave and thus the prolonged absence of the Cardinal from Florence, the city would be in danger, perhaps even from the French.<sup>137</sup>

There were other weaknesses that the plotters hoped to exploit. Valori recorded that Boscoli believed that Giuliano could be assassinated on one of the evenings he went about with 'little company',<sup>138</sup> and Folchi revealed that Boscoli believed that the 'guard of the city' was not as strong as it might be, since the Medici had not ensured that the neighbouring palaces to theirs were occupied by 'friends and

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<sup>131</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xv, col. 572: Letter of Ser Vittorio Lippomano, n.d. Feb./Mar. 1513; L. della Robbia, 'Recitazione del caso di Pietro Paolo Boscoli e di Agostino Capponi, l' anno MDXIII', ed. F. Polidori, *A.S.I.*, Ser. 1, i (1842), p. 283; A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1108, f. 207<sup>v</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 26 November 1523.

<sup>132</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 75; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 5; L. Morelli, *Cronaca*, ed. I. di San Luigi, *Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, xix (Florence, 1785), p. 206.

<sup>133</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 39, ff. 161<sup>v</sup>-2<sup>v</sup>: Letters of 19 and 22 February 1513; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xv, col. 573: Giuliano de' Medici to Piero da Bibbiena, 19 February 1513.

<sup>134</sup> Anon., 'Diario istorico', ff. 96<sup>v</sup>-7<sup>r</sup>; Vaglianti, *Storia*, p. 237; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 5.

<sup>135</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 39, ff. 161<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>136</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xv, col. 573: Giuliano de' Medici to Piero da Bibbiena, 19 February 1513.

<sup>137</sup> Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>138</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

relatives'.<sup>139</sup> Yet both Folchi and Valori refused to join up: Valori partly perhaps because he believed that the plot would have no effect without the death of the Cardinal;<sup>140</sup> Folchi probably because, as he confessed to have told Boscoli, he thought that the regime was 'most secure', partly because in Florence there were no 'citizen soldiers' as there were in Bologna or Perugia.<sup>141</sup> Boscoli and Capponi were attempting to overthrow the regime without outside help and Folchi may have believed that they were wrong to do so, however weak the regime might be when the Pope died. Thus the plot, while being a clear illustration of the unpopularity of the Medici regime at its inception, is no sign that opposition to the Medici was thus any stronger or more capable of overthrowing the regime without foreign support than opposition to the popular government had been.

The plot of 1522 hoped to appeal to popular discontent, but it also sought the aid of foreign arms, and was depending on outside help just as much as any plot against the popular government had done. There were two parts to the plot, and the dependence of either on outside help has been little emphasized in recent accounts.<sup>142</sup> The first part was instigated from Rome by Cardinal Francesco Soderini, who had been looking for an opportunity to raise a foreign expedition against the Medici in Florence since at least 1518, when Benedetto Buondelmonti feared that he was encouraging the Spanish to launch an attack. Since the Spanish had been persuaded that year to turn the government of Siena 'upside down', Buondelmonti wrote, 'how much more would they be persuaded to do so to the government of Florence, having the means and knowing that the Great Council and that past way of governing was more loved than this'.<sup>143</sup>

Soderini found the opportunity he had been waiting for in the war begun in the Summer of 1521 between France and the Medici Pope, Leo X, his Spanish allies and

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<sup>139</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., LXXXIX, n. 38.

<sup>140</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>141</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., LXXXIX, n. 38.

<sup>142</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 118-20; H. Hauvette, *Un exilé florentin à la cour de France au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle: Luigi Alamanni (1495-1556). Sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris, 1903), pp. 32-3; Lowe, *Francesco Soderini*, pp. 126-7.

<sup>143</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXLIII, n. 154: Benedetto Buondelmonti to Goro Gheri, 25 September 1518, 'se lloro hanno pensato et prestato orecchi ad volgare sotto sopra lo stato di Siena questo anno ... quanto più lo fariano dello stato di Fiorenza havendo il modo et sapendo che quello consiglio grande et modo di reggimento era più amato che questo'.

Florence. But it was the death of the Pope in December 1521 that swung him into action. Niccolò Martelli later confessed that ‘immediately’ on hearing of the Pope’s death, Soderini began to try every means possible to ‘destroy’ Cardinal Giulio and the Medici and remove them from Florence.<sup>144</sup> Soderini sent instructions to his nephew in France, Bishop Giuliano Soderini, to urge the King that ‘then was the time to think to the affairs of Florence’, which other Florentines around the King were also doing.<sup>145</sup> At the end of February it was reported from Rome that Soderini was preparing an expedition with French backing to be led by the *condottiere* Renzo da Ceri to ‘overthrow the regime’ first in Siena and then Florence.<sup>146</sup>

The importance of Leo’s death in precipitating the plot reveals the extent to which the security of the Medici regime had depended on the elevation of Cardinal Giovanni to the Papacy following the plot of 1513, and thus helps to explain why there had been no plots against the regime during his Pontificate.<sup>147</sup> As had Lodovico Alamanni in 1516,<sup>148</sup> so had Niccolò Guicciardini remarked three years later, that in the face of popular discontent the survival of Lorenzo de’ Medici depended ‘solely’ on the powerful support of the Medici Pope which secured the regime against popular uprisings, plots, and expeditions by any but ‘the most powerful’ army. Once that ‘obstacle’ was removed, Guicciardini had predicted, expeditions, plots and uprisings would follow.<sup>149</sup>

Renzo’s expedition left for Tuscany at the end of March.<sup>150</sup> Although often assumed otherwise,<sup>151</sup> the second part of the plot, a conspiracy in Florence to assassinate Cardinal Giulio led by Zanobi Buondelmonti and Luigi Alamanni, had by then already begun. For whilst uncovered in May, it was first hatched in February, as

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<sup>144</sup> ‘Processo di Niccolò Martelli’, ed. C. Guasti, ‘Documenti della congiura fatto contro il cardinale Giulio de’ Medici nel 1522’, *Giornale Storico degli Archivi Toscani*, iii (1859), p. 239. The original manuscript used, but not cited, by Guasti is in A.S.F., Miscellanea Repubblicana, VIII, 238.

<sup>145</sup> ‘Processo di Niccolò Martelli’, p. 257; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 135.

<sup>146</sup> A.S.F., Otto di Pratica, Responsive, 22, ff. 46<sup>v</sup>, 73<sup>r</sup>-77<sup>r</sup>: Letters from Galeotto de’ Medici, Rome, 23 February, 11 March 1522; A.S.F., Archivio Urbino, Class 1, Division G, 132, ff. 24<sup>r</sup>-30<sup>v</sup>: Gabriel de Guidolotto to Duke of Urbino, Rome, 24 March to 11 April 1522.

<sup>147</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, p. 75.

<sup>148</sup> L. Alamanni, ‘Discorso’, ed. Albertini, *Staatsbewusstsein*, pp. 365-6.

<sup>149</sup> N. Guicciardini, ‘Discorso’, p. 362.

<sup>150</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 394.

<sup>151</sup> Lowe, *Francesco Soderini*, p. 127; Stephens, *Fall*, p. 119.



the condemnations by the *Otto* make clear.<sup>152</sup> The plot had clearly arisen in response to news of Renzo's planned expedition, which had reached them from Rome through Battista della Palla.<sup>153</sup> He had been sent to Rome after Leo's death by Buondelmonti and Alamanni, according to Nerli, to discuss with Soderini the raising of just such an expedition to support a plot in the city.<sup>154</sup> Certainly the plot would not have gone ahead without foreign support. Niccolò Martelli later confessed that when he informed Buondelmonti in March of his plan to poison the Cardinal, sponsored by the French, Buondelmonti had told him that it was not 'suitable'.<sup>155</sup> 'To wish to overthrow the regime in Florence', Buondelmonti had told him, not only was 'necessary' the death of the Cardinal, but was also 'expedient', the 'assistance of a little of the army and favour of the King' in order to 'resist the forces of the Medici family'.<sup>156</sup>

Buondelmonti's remark reveals the essential weakness of opponents to the regime, despite the popular discontent with the Medici, and their inability to overthrow the regime without outside help. It testifies not only to the strength of the regime but also to one of the reasons for it. There was more to the strength of the Medici regime than its leader, and while the Cardinal's assassination was essential, the collapse of the regime would neither simply nor necessarily follow.

Buondelmonti told Martelli that to gain the essential support of the French for the plot, he had despatched della Palla to France to ask for the 'favour' of the King and request him to commission Renzo to do what they and Soderini asked of him.<sup>157</sup> Soderini also instructed his nephew, Giuliano, to request the King's favour for the plot.<sup>158</sup> Della Palla was despatched by the beginning of March,<sup>159</sup> and his and Giuliano's mission was to request that the French send the Genoese galleys and the

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<sup>152</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, ff. 30<sup>r</sup>, 39<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>153</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 80.

<sup>154</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', p. 241; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 138.

<sup>155</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', pp. 241-2, 267.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 242-3.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 260.

<sup>159</sup> Vettori, 'Sommario', p. 342.

Duke of Ferrara in support of an advance by Renzo towards Florence from Siena.<sup>160</sup> Renzo was to advance through Florentine territory under the banner of 'Libertas', and to notify the city that he was coming 'to free it from tyranny and restore it to the *popolo*', according to the wish of the French King.<sup>161</sup> Buondelmonti told Martelli that such an attack on Florentine territory with 'so many movements from every side', and coinciding with the conspiracy inside the city to admit Renzo's forces, would 'stun' the 'popolo', and allow the conspirators to win their support and overthrow the regime.<sup>162</sup> Thus the conspirators hoped to appeal to popular discontent with the regime, but as Giuliano Soderini remarked to Martelli, 'that sluggish *popolo* had not enough courage to lift itself from servitude', yet what they would not do 'for love', the King would make them do 'by force'.<sup>163</sup>

The conspirators were evidently not alone in believing that the regime could not be toppled without outside help. Buondelmonti told Martelli that he was waiting for the reply from the French King before attempting to recruit more citizens to the plot, convinced that they would join him more willingly if he could show them that he had French support.<sup>164</sup> The King acceded to all the conspirators' requests for support from Genoa and Ferrara,<sup>165</sup> but in the meantime Renzo had failed to overthrow the pro-Medici regime in Siena and finally capitulated towards the end of May.<sup>166</sup> Renzo's defeat, as Nerli says,<sup>167</sup> had stopped the plot in its tracks regardless of its uncovering a day or two later on 24 May due to the arrest of a courier.<sup>168</sup> The regime in Florence had sent troops to defend their allies in Siena, rightly convinced, as Francesco Guicciardini later argued, that if Renzo had succeeded in overthrowing the regime in Siena, he would have succeeded in doing so in Florence.<sup>169</sup> In attempting to

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<sup>160</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', pp. 244, 246.

<sup>161</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, f. 32<sup>v</sup>; 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', p. 248.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 259.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., p. 244.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., pp. 246-9.

<sup>166</sup> A.S.F., Otto di Pratica, Responsive, 25, f. 193<sup>r</sup>; Galeotto de' Medici, Rome, 23 May, 1522; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 403.

<sup>167</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, pp. 138-9.

<sup>168</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 223 (Libro di Bandi), ff. 184<sup>r</sup>, 185<sup>r</sup>; Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 177<sup>v</sup>; Masi, *Ricordanze*, p. 257; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 403, 405; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xxxiii, col. 297; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, pp. 84-5.

<sup>169</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iv, pp. 165-7.

overthrow the regime with foreign support, the plot of 1522 had posed a serious threat to the regime, arguably much more serious than that posed by the plot of 1513.

With the elevation of Cardinal Giulio to the Papacy as Clement VII in 1523 opposition to the Medicean regime might have been expected to be as subdued as it had been during the pontificate of Leo. That it was not was because Clement failed to prevent an expedition against the city by the 'most powerful army', the imperial forces of Charles V of Spain, which had threatened to attack since the winter of 1526, and did so in March 1527. War between the imperialists and the League of Cognac, comprising France, Venice, the Pope, and Florence, had broken out in the Summer of 1526. Luigi Guicciardini recalled how the 'popolo' had welcomed the war, believing that it would provide an 'occasion' to free itself from the 'servitude' of the Medici.<sup>170</sup> So it turned out, as historians have recognized, but accounts have focused mainly on the diplomatic failures of the regime, rather than the actions of opponents, and the relationship between the two remains to be examined.<sup>171</sup>

Both Nerli and Varchi describe how on account of the defeat of papal forces and the death of Giovanni delle Bande Nere de' Medici at Borgoforte in November 1526 opponents of the regime became increasingly bold and encouraged a group of 'young nobles' (*giovani nobili*) who shared their aims to request the *Signoria* for the right to bear arms, ostensibly to defend the city from the Imperialist threat.<sup>172</sup> As the imperialist threat grew stronger these young nobles, led by Piero and Giuliano Salviati, and who were to be at the forefront of *Tumulto del Venerdì* in April 1527, became more bold, organized and subversive, as we shall see, encouraged no doubt by the prospect of imperialist help for a possible revolt.<sup>173</sup> In January Pieradovardo Giachinotti, Battista Pitti, and Bartolomeo Pescioni, who were not involved in the demands for arms,<sup>174</sup> were discovered with exiles in Venice to be attempting to persuade the imperialist forces in Lombardy under Bourbon to advance on Florence and overthrow the regime.

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<sup>170</sup> L. Guicciardini, 'Sacco', quoted in Stephens, *Fall*, p. 195.

<sup>171</sup> The best account is in Roth, *Last Republic*, 17-23.

<sup>172</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 92; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 145.

<sup>173</sup> The activities of the young nobles are discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

<sup>174</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 147.

This conspiracy is usually thought to have been solely the work of Florentine exiles in Venice.<sup>175</sup> Certainly as Varchi and Busini have it, at the behest of Giovanbattista Soderini, then in Vicenza, solicitations to Bourbon were made by Messer Baldassare Carducci and Lodovico de' Nobili, to whom Busini also adds Lorenzo Salviati.<sup>176</sup> Thus at Clement's request the Venetians detained Carducci in mid-February, and the Pope sent agents to examine him, although Nobili managed to flee Venice before he could be arrested.<sup>177</sup> Yet the Venetian ambassador in Florence understood that not only had Carducci been attempting to 'overthrow the regime', but that he was involved in a 'certain plot discovered in Florence'.<sup>178</sup> Baldovinetti records Carducci's arrest in Venice with that of the three citizens in Florence because they had all 'acted against the regime'.<sup>179</sup>

At Clement's request,<sup>180</sup> Pescioni was arrested on 15 January, Pitti and Giachinotti some two weeks later,<sup>181</sup> for 'matters against the regime of the Medici', as one contemporary recorded.<sup>182</sup> Some later accounts,<sup>183</sup> followed by the most recent modern account of the period,<sup>184</sup> described their arrests as made because they had spoken contemptuously of the Medici and the regime. Yet there can be no doubt that they were arrested and examined 'for suspicion of conspiracy' as the Venetian ambassador reported,<sup>185</sup> and that they were found, as one anonymous diarist recorded, to have been negotiating with the imperialists.<sup>186</sup> Thus it was understood in Rome at the beginning of March that in Florence the 'principal parties' of 'a conspiracy against

<sup>175</sup> Roth, *Last Republic*, p. 21; J. Hook, *The Sack of Rome, 1527* (London, 1972), p. 149.

<sup>176</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 80; B. Varchi, *Storia fiorentina*, ed. G. Milanese, (Florence, 1857-8), i, p. 174.

<sup>177</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xliv, coll. 118, 120, 168-9, 200.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, coll. 168-9, 170.

<sup>179</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 186<sup>v</sup>: 'avevano fatto contro allo stato'.

<sup>180</sup> L. Guicciardini, 'Il sacco di Roma', in *Il sacco di Roma del MDXXVII*, ed. C. Milanese (Florence, 1867), pp. 118-9.

<sup>181</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 197, ff. 4<sup>r</sup>, 11<sup>r</sup> (15 January and 6 February). The record states simply their names and 'capiatur'.

<sup>182</sup> Anonymous, 'Cronica da anonimo di Firenze dal 1521 al 1536', B.N.F., Magl., XXV, 366, ff. 153<sup>r-v</sup> records the arrests for 'i chase contro allo stato de Medici' (Pescioni), and 'per conto di stato' (Pitti and Giachinotti).

<sup>183</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 133; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 147; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 97.

<sup>184</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, p. 197.

<sup>185</sup> M. Foscarini, 'Relazione di Firenze', ed. E. Albèri, *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, Ser. 2, i (Florence, 1839), pp. 51, 84.

<sup>186</sup> Anonymous, 'Diario dall' anno 1521 al 1532', B.N.F., Magl., XXV, 555, f. 16<sup>r</sup>. Only Pitti and Giachinotti are mentioned.

the present government' had been arrested.<sup>187</sup> Describing the *Tumulto del Venerdì* one Medici servant noted the release of prisoners from the Bargello, including Pitti, Giachinotti and 'the others recently arrested for the plot (*trattato*) they were making'.<sup>188</sup>

The conspirators do not seem to have succeeded in acquiring Bourbon's support, for the Duke appears to have been uncommitted to any advance on Florence until sometime after the plot's discovery, when as Filippo Valori recorded, he summoned Nobili from his refuge in Ferrara to give 'true accounts of the affairs of Tuscany'.<sup>189</sup> Valori had joined Bourbon's camp after fleeing Florence in the aftermath of the arrest of Pitti and Giachinotti, and records how he had sought to persuade the Duke of the discontent in the city, and of the 'facility' with which he could 'overthrow the regime of Florence'. Soon after Nobili's arrival, according to Valori, Bourbon promised the pair the 'restitution of the liberty of our city'.<sup>190</sup> Valori had for long been a well-known opponent of the regime, and together with his father, Niccolò, who had been involved in the plot of 1513, was amongst those detained in 1521.<sup>191</sup> Those involved in the Pitti-Giachinotti plot were equally long-standing opponents of the Medici,<sup>192</sup> and the imperialist threat to the city in 1527 had evidently provided a long-awaited opportunity to overthrow the regime with outside help.

Bourbon began his advance on Florence at the beginning of April,<sup>193</sup> and in response the young nobles headed by Salviati renewed their activities and plans for revolt with imperialist support. By the time of the *Tumulto del Venerdì* of 26 April, Bourbon's forces were only twenty miles from the city.<sup>194</sup> Alessandro de' Medici was informed the next day that the 'heads' of the revolt had been Giuliano, Piero and Averardo Salviati, and Niccolò Capponi, that it had been a 'conspiracy of more than a thousand youths' and the work of Lorenzo Salviati, believed to be in the imperialist

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<sup>187</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, III, ii, p. 88: Perez to Lope de Soria, 2 March 1527.

<sup>188</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXXVI, n. 80: Fabrizio Peregrino to Alessandro de' Medici, 27 April 1527.

<sup>189</sup> F. Valori, 'Ricordi', f. 4<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>191</sup> Appendix C.

<sup>192</sup> Appendix A, vii.

<sup>193</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, III, ii, p. 136.

<sup>194</sup> Roth, *Last Republic*, p. 23.

camp, and by which 'conspiracy' Bourbon had approached the city to aid a revolt.<sup>195</sup> The 'conspiracy' had actually planned an uprising for 27 April, Alessandro was later informed, but the departure of Cortona and the two young Medici from the city the day before to meet the forces of the League had provided an earlier 'occasion'.<sup>196</sup>

There seems little doubt, as Ughi later recorded, and as was widely rumoured in Florence at the time, that there had been a conspiracy in the city prior to the *Tumulto* to overthrow the regime with Bourbon's help.<sup>197</sup> The Emperor was informed after the failure of the revolt that Bourbon was withdrawing his forces to Siena because certain secret 'plots' (*tratos*) he had had in the city had been discovered.<sup>198</sup> The *Tumulto* itself however, was the result of accident rather than design, although the young nobles led by Salviati who assaulted the Palace may well have been intending to use the opportunity presented by Cortona's temporary absence from the city.<sup>199</sup> Yet Bourbon was too far from the city to help them,<sup>200</sup> and without foreign support the revolt was crushed. Its failure is the best proof of the weakness of opponents to the Medici, and of the inability of even a popular revolt to overthrow the regime without outside help. Indeed, as Francesco Guicciardini complained a few days later, the revolt would have been 'tiny' if Cortona's 'ignorance' had not prevented it from being dealt with when it started, and his indiscreet departure not then encouraged the belief that the Medici had fled the city.<sup>201</sup>

Some of those involved in *Tumulto* were aware of their weakness, and sought to appeal for aid to the French and Venetian forces of the League, under the Duke of Urbino and the Marquis of Saluzzo, that were defending the city from Bourbon's advance. Indeed Paolo Benivieni described a few days later how the 'young nobles' had assaulted the Palace, 'trusting on their opinion that the Duke would help the party of liberty because of his enmity with the Medici family', and wrote that Saluzzo was

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<sup>195</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXXVI, n. 80: Fabrizio Peregrino to Alessandro de' Medici, 27 April 1527.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., n. 89: Fabrizio Peregrino to Alessandro de' Medici, 28 April 1527.

<sup>197</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, col. 26; G. Ughi, 'Cronica di Firenze', ed. F. Frediani, *A.S.I.*, Ser. 1, appendix vii (1849), pp. 140-1.

<sup>198</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, III, ii, p. 171: Perez to the Emperor, 30 April 1527.

<sup>199</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, coll. 581, 583.

<sup>200</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1109, f. 313<sup>r</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 26 April 1527; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, coll. 581, 585.

<sup>201</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, xiv, ed. P. Ricci (Rome, 1969), p. 11: Francesco Guicciardini to Gianmatteo Ghiberti, 29 April 1527. See also Idem, *Storia d' Italia*, v, p. 132.

thought in Florence to have been 'aware' of plans for revolt.<sup>202</sup> Francesco Guicciardini was later blamed for having persuaded Saluzzo and Urbino to repress the revolt against their inclinations to let it run on, or even, in Urbino's case, to give it active support.<sup>203</sup>

Capponi was of the opinion that it was not the 'opportune time' for a revolt.<sup>204</sup> Nerli describes how Capponi and other 'primi' in the Palace during the *Tumulto* 'knew that regimes are overthrown on other foundations than on the hopes of popular tumults', and had advised taking measures to secure the city and prevent the Medici returning, particularly that a message be sent to the heads of the League to confirm the city's loyalty in a new treaty. The League would have agreed, according to Nerli, but the popular clamour favoured measures for the immediate dismantling of the Medici regime.<sup>205</sup> Capponi, Matteo Strozzi and other 'principal citizens' gathered in the room of the Gonfalonier, and did eventually succeed in despatching Bartolomeo Cavalcanti with a letter to Urbino and the other heads of the League's forces. Drafted by Francesco Vettori, the letter sought to assure them that though the city no longer wanted to be governed by the Medici, it would continue to be loyal to the League.<sup>206</sup> But by then it was too late. Cavalcanti had not yet left the city when Cortona returned with Urbino, Saluzzo, and the city's garrison to quash the revolt.<sup>207</sup>

Several contemporaries emphasized at the time the importance of the role of Urbino and the captains of the League in quelling the revolt,<sup>208</sup> and in doing so emphasize the importance of foreign support not only to opponents of the Medici, but the regime itself. Benivieni wrote a few days later that the 'young men' were judged to have made two errors. The first was in not coming to an understanding with Urbino, since he had been instrumental in restoring the Medici's control, and the

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<sup>202</sup> B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 142: Paolo Benivieni to Bernardo Segni, 29 April 1527.

<sup>203</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Scritti autobiografici e rari*, ed. R. Palmarocchi (Bari, 1933), p. 222.

<sup>204</sup> B. Segni, *Storie fiorentine* (Milan, 1805), i, p. 10.

<sup>205</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 149.

<sup>206</sup> J. Nardi, 'Lettera sopra la mutatione dello stato nel 1527', ed. I. del Badia, in *Miscellanea fiorentina di erudizione e storia*, i (Florence, 1902), pp. 137, 139; Idem, *Istorie*, ii, p. 136; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 120; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, col. 592.

<sup>207</sup> Nardi, 'Lettera', p. 137; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 113, 120.

<sup>208</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, coll. 581, 583; Foscari, 'Relazione', p. 52; F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, v, p. 132.

second was to have agreed too soon to vacate the Palace in return for an amnesty.<sup>209</sup> They had made other errors, such as not guarding the gates of the city against the Medici's return, and it is this that has been emphasized in modern accounts.<sup>210</sup> Luigi Guicciardini also emphasized the failure to close the gates, recalling that Urbino afterwards always maintained that if he had found them shut, he would not have attempted to force them, so little love did he bear the Medici.<sup>211</sup> That remark however, serves to emphasize that the main reason for the failure of the revolt was that it lacked outside help.

The imperialist threat to the city had provided the opportunity for opponents to attempt to overthrow the regime with outside help, and neither the Giachinotti-Pitti plot, nor the conspiracy preceding the *Tumulto del Venerdì* would have occurred without it. Yet the war with the imperialists provided not just the opportunity but the reason for revolt. One anonymous account describes that the young men declared during the revolt that they wanted to be 'under the King of the France and not under tyrants'.<sup>212</sup> The Venetian and Mantuan ambassadors emphasized that the revolt had desired to ally the city with France and Venice, even recounting that the young men had stormed the Palace to the cries of 'France' and 'Marco'.<sup>213</sup>

Yet the best illustration of how far the failures of papal foreign policy provided the reason for the revolt is the presence of Niccolò Capponi, Matteo Strozzi, and Francesco Vettori at the head of the *Tumulto*, with Mainardo Cavalcanti, Agostino Dini, Francesco Serristori, Jacopo Gianfigliuzzi and other 'grandi', all former supporters of the Medici.<sup>214</sup> These had all been amongst those leading citizens in the room of the Gonfalonier directing the revolt,<sup>215</sup> and all had been amongst a small group of around twenty citizens who had accompanied Piero Salviati that morning to support his request for the distribution of arms.<sup>216</sup> They had probably been

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<sup>209</sup> B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 142: Paolo Benivieni to Bernardo Segni, 29 April 1527.

<sup>210</sup> Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 27, 31; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. 191.

<sup>211</sup> L. Guicciardini, 'Sacco', p. 140.

<sup>212</sup> Anon., 'Diario, 1521-1532', f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>213</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, coll. 581, 583: Letters of Marco Foscarelli and Giovanni dell' Agnello, 26 April 1527. See also *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, III, ii, p. 175.

<sup>214</sup> B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 142, 143: Paolo Benivieni to Bernardo Segni, 29 April and 2 May 1527; Anon., 'Cronica', f. 155<sup>r</sup>; Nardi, *Istorie*, i, pp. 131-2, 139; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 106, 108.

<sup>215</sup> Nardi, 'Lettera', p. 137; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 117.

<sup>216</sup> Anon., 'Diario, 1521-1532', f. 17<sup>r</sup>; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 305-6; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 149.



conspiring with Bourbon before the revolt, and Vettori, Strozzi and Capponi had certainly been conspiring against the Medici with Filippo Strozzi in the winter of 1526/7. With the exception of Cavalcanti these were all leading members of the Medicean regime, and had sat in the *Otto di Pratica* in recent years.<sup>217</sup> The failures of papal diplomacy not only furnished them with the means to overthrow the Medici, but were also the principal reason for their desire to do so.

Clement's failures in the autumn of 1526 to prevent the growing threat of an imperialist attack on Florence exposed it to the danger of the sack, and did so at the increasing expense of the citizens themselves. The regime itself began to fear that Clement would lead the city to 'manifest ruin', and in October the *Otto di Pratica* sent Francesco Vettori to inform the Pope of their desire to be consulted before he took decisions on the city's behalf, and to bring to his attention the need not to burden the city with 'too much expense', for his reputation amongst the citizens was beginning to fall, and they could not be 'squeezed' as they had been in the past.<sup>218</sup> Francesco Vettori later recalled the financial burden imposed on Florence to finance Clement's foreign policies, and remarked that although the Pope 'loved the city of Florence much, he loved himself more', and he was prepared to put the city 'at danger' to save himself from ruin.<sup>219</sup> While largely unexplored in the only two modern accounts of the plot,<sup>220</sup> it was the need to secure the city from the imperialist threat and save it from financial exhaustion that turned the minds of Vettori and Capponi to removing the city from papal control.

According to Segni, Capponi told a *pratica* in December that since the Pope desired to 'persevere in the war and in the ruin of Italy', citizens should think of the 'peace of their afflicted country'.<sup>221</sup> In January Capponi wrote to the Pope criticizing his involvement of Florence in the League, his pursuit of the war with the imperialists, and the resultant threat to the 'welfare of the country' from an army that had assumed

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<sup>217</sup> See Appendix A, viii and x.

<sup>218</sup> Vettori, 'Sommaro', p. 370.

<sup>219</sup> F. Vettori, *Scritti storici e politici*, ed. E. Niccolini (Bari, 1972), pp. 276-7.

<sup>220</sup> Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 20-22; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 184-9.

<sup>221</sup> Segni, 'Vita', p. 297.

the custom of 'swearing by the glorious sack of Florence'.<sup>222</sup> Capponi accused the Pope of desiring the war on account of his own 'ambition', or to 'satisfy some personal hatred' and of being more concerned with 'the greatness of his own affairs' than 'the good of his country'.<sup>223</sup> He requested Clement's permission for Florence to 'govern itself separately', to be able to do whatever appeared to the city 'most suitable for its own welfare'.<sup>224</sup>

In February Capponi wrote again complaining that matters had not improved, and describing the fear in the city of an imperialist approach.<sup>225</sup> He again expressed his desire that the Pope 'let go of the reins' in Florence if his own interests and those of the Church precluded an accord with the Emperor. Capponi wrote that he did not think that the Pope desired to protect Florence, and would give the city up to the imperialists in order to save the domains of the Church, and that when he did so Florence would be able to buy them off with nothing other than the blood of its citizens.<sup>226</sup> By this time Capponi, Vettori and Strozzi were already engaged in attempts to wrest the city from Medici control.

In early December the Emperor was informed by his ambassador in Rome that the Florentines were 'discontented with the Pope owing to the large sums of money he has drawn from them' and desired to come to terms with the Emperor independently of the Pope.<sup>227</sup> In mid-December Filippo Strozzi was in correspondence with the outlaws Zanobi Buondelmonti and Battista della Palla.<sup>228</sup> According to Varchi, the two outlaws travelled from Siena to Naples to discuss with Filippo Strozzi what could be done to ensure that the city did not suffer the sack on account of Clement's 'stubbornness and indifference'. They did so, Varchi continues, with the secret consent of Francesco Vettori and other Florentine citizens, of whom Niccolò Capponi was the head, and they sought to persuade the imperial Viceroy in Naples,

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<sup>222</sup> G. Ruscelli, ed., *Lettere di principi* (Venice, 1570), ii, f. 206<sup>r</sup>: Giovanbattista Sanga to Niccolò Capponi, 15 January 1527.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 206<sup>r</sup>, 207<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 206<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 209<sup>r</sup>: Giovanbattista Sanga to Niccolò Capponi, 7 February 1527.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 209<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>227</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, III, i, p. 1035: Perez to the Emperor, 4 December 1526.

<sup>228</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 99, ff. 8<sup>r-v</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Battista della Palla and Zanobi Buondelmonti, 17 December 1526; *Ibid.*, ff. 18<sup>r-v</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Giovanni Bandini, 22 December 1526.

Don Ugo da Moncada, that the best way to hurt the Pope would be to overthrow the Medici in Florence and ally with the city.<sup>229</sup> Filippo Strozzi's correspondence testifies to the involvement of Vettori, Capponi, and both Lorenzo and Matteo Strozzi in the intrigues.<sup>230</sup> Lorenzo Strozzi, Filippo's brother, later recalled that Vettori had written to Filippo with the consent of others in the city and requested him to undertake secret discussions on behalf of the city with imperial agents in Naples concerning an accord, since the 'men of condition' did not want to go to the sack on account of Clement's 'obstinacy'.<sup>231</sup>

As a hostage of the imperialists to guarantee a truce established in September Filippo Strozzi had particular reason to be 'desperate' on account of Clement's policy. For the Pope had violated the truce and Strozzi's freedom depended on a settlement. Lorenzo later recalled that it was for this reason, and resentful at the way in which he had been treated by the Pope, that Filippo discussed with the two outlaws the means of 'overthrowing the government of the city' and restoring it to the devotion of the Emperor.<sup>232</sup> At the end of December Filippo wrote to Vettori of his doubt that there would be an accord and his certainty that the Pope was heading for 'ruin' because 'thus demands his fate and my disgrace'.<sup>233</sup> The ship of St. Peter was sinking, he told Vettori, it was time 'to throw away some part to save the lives of the rest'.<sup>234</sup>

Strozzi's designs were offset by a truce of 15 March between Clement and the imperial Viceroy in Italy, Lannoy, and by which he was released.<sup>235</sup> Returning to Rome, he excused himself with the Pope for having conversed with the two *ribelli*.<sup>236</sup> Yet his plans are of significance because he believed it might be possible to overthrow the regime without foreign support. Lorenzo Strozzi recalled that Filippo believed

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<sup>229</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 98.

<sup>230</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 99, f. 20<sup>r</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Battista della Palla and Zanobi Buondelmonti, 30 January 1527; A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. III, 108, f. 104<sup>r</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Lorenzo Strozzi, 16 February 1527; A. Bardi, ed., 'Filippo Strozzi (da nuovi documenti)', *A.S.I.*, Ser. 5, xiv (1894), p. 55: Filippo Strozzi to Francesco Vettori, 18 January 1527.

<sup>231</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', p. xlii.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xl-ii.

<sup>233</sup> Bardi, 'Filippo Strozzi', p. 50: Filippo Strozzi to Francesco Vettori, 30 December 1526.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>235</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, III, ii, p. 130.

<sup>236</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', p. xlii.

that the city was in such 'great fear' of the advancing imperial army, that if he could simply approach the city unsuspected by the Pope, the regime would be overthrown. Thus he had offered the Viceroy fifty thousand *scudi* to release him for three months, at the end of which time he would return to captivity if no revolution had taken place.<sup>237</sup> Filippo wrote to the two outlaws at the end of January that there would be 'no difficulty' in approaching the city, and he conjectured that no forces would then be needed. While 'fear' inclined him to secure the use of the forces of Siena if need be, he would still prefer to do it without them if possible. He believed, he wrote, that 'the matter would fall into my hands', if he was in 'complete faith' with 'whoever rules'. If he saw that he was not, he would have recourse to 'the friends outside', the imperial armies in Lombardy or Naples. 'Nothing else is necessary', he wrote, but the 'occasion' of some imperialist success, even 'a false news well-coloured', and the 'fear' and discontent in the city was such that it lacked only a 'leader'.<sup>238</sup>

If opposition had come to embrace the regime itself, Strozzi believed, it would be strong enough to overthrow the Medici without foreign support. In the light of the failure of the *Tumulto*, Strozzi's confidence that the Medici regime could be toppled without outside help might seem misplaced, but Strozzi was planning not a popular revolt but an internal coup. If the leaders of the regime were willing, no forceful push would be necessary. If they were not willing then an imperialist threat could scare them into giving way. Such a moment followed the sack of Rome on 6 May, and

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<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xlii.

<sup>238</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 99, f. 20<sup>v</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Battista della Palla and Zanobi Buondelmonti, 30 January 1527.

resulted ten days later in the peaceful overthrow of the regime, in which indeed the arrival of Strozzi in the city was instrumental.<sup>239</sup>

As the threat of attack from Bourbon grew, Capponi, Vettori, Matteo Strozzi and the other leading members of the regime at the head of the *Tumulto* will have been amongst those Florentines reported in mid-March to be imploring Clement to make peace, and not to be the cause of their 'utter destruction and ruin', and urging the Pope that the city had contributed such large sums towards the war that they could bear the burden no longer.<sup>240</sup> Francesco Vettori later recalled how despite warnings not to do so, Cortona had continued to burden the city 'without discretion', even imposing on the possessions of the guilds and the churches, so that the whole city was 'discontent'. He noted that the 'love that peoples have for those who govern them proceeds entirely from utility, and when that is lacking, the love converts to hatred'.<sup>241</sup>

Discontent with the Medici on account of the financial burdens and imperialist threat in 1527 was both widespread and extreme, as Guicciardini recorded two days before the *Tumulto*, and played a large part in fomenting the popular hatred that erupted in the revolt.<sup>242</sup> There had been popular discontent with the Medici since 1512 however, waiting for an opportunity for revolt. Events in 1527 had merely turned discontent into desperation.

During the Medici regime, as under the popular government, it was the failure of the regime to prevent an external military threat that above all else provided the

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<sup>239</sup> Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 40-5; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 194-6.

<sup>240</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, III, ii, p. 120: Perez to the Emperor, 16 March 1527.

<sup>241</sup> Vettori, *Scritti*, p. 279.

<sup>242</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, xiv, pp. 3, 5-6: Letters to Gianmatteo Ghiberti, 24 and 26 April 1527.

opportunity to attempt to overthrow the regime. If Florence had been as able to defend itself as Venice, its political life would have been more peaceful. The dependence of conspiracy on foreign support meant that it was foreign events above all others that dictated the timing of plots. Plots were less frequent after 1494 than they had been a hundred years previously because regimes were stronger and opponents weaker than they had been, and thus plots were more dependent on outside help. The domination of Italy after 1494 by only two great powers meant that there were also fewer opportunities to obtain essential foreign support than there had been in the late fourteenth century. Nevertheless the Italian Wars ensured that there were more opportunities to gain outside help than there had been in the Laurentian era, when the Italian political scene had been more stable, and plots were more frequent after 1494 as a result.

That conspiracy depended on foreign support testifies to the weakness of the opponents of both the Medici and the popular government, and their inability to overthrow the regime without outside help. The security of both regimes, whatever their popularity, was to depend in the end on their ability to secure the city from external military threat. It was above all the overwhelming presence of the Spanish army that explains the equal facility with which both Soderini was overthrown and the *parlamento* forced in 1512, and it was the lack of outside help more than anything else that explains the failure of the *Tumulto* in 1527.

Yet whilst the Italian Wars provided the occasion for attempts to overthrow the regime, they did not, except in 1527, provide the reason for which they were made at all. Even in 1527 the failure of the Medici to defend the city from external threat only mattered because of the deeper underlying discontent with Medici rule. Support

for Soderini and the popular government had remained strong despite the equally serious failure of the regime in 1512, and the coup that did take place was the work of long-standing opponents of Soderini for whom the Spanish threat provided not the reason but the opportunity to overthrow the regime. To explain why there were plots at all we need to examine the aims of conspiracies, and the discontent they hoped to alleviate.

## Domestic Instability: Aristocratic Republicanism and the Re-establishment of the Past Regime

Those who desired to overthrow the regime in Florence can be said to have generally sought to do so on one of two accounts. They were discontented either because they had always desired the re-establishment of the past regime, or because they desired to establish a regime in which leading citizens and those from the city's leading families, the *ottimati*, were dominant. For example, amongst those condemned for speaking against the regime during the last republic were those such as Carlo Cocchi and Ficino Ficini who both believed that the city 'belonged to the Medici and not to others', and desired that they be restored to power.<sup>1</sup> Girolamo degli Albizzi however, railed against the 'rabble' in government, declaring that 'we gentlemen and nobles expect the government to be in our hands and not those of these riff-raff' and threatening that 'we will soon push you out and chase away you louts'.<sup>2</sup>

Albizzi had held no office himself, and his father, described by the Medici as 'of good quality and judgement',<sup>3</sup> was a prominent but not a leading citizen, having held positions in the *Signoria*, the Twelve Good Men and the *Otto di Guardia* between 1500 and 1516, but not in the inner circles of the regime.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, Albizzi's was an ancient noble family with both wealth and a long record of political prominence, and the desire of members of such families, the *ottimati*, to secure for

<sup>1</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 36; Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 201 (Libro di Notificazioni), f. 131<sup>r</sup>. These cases are discussed in detail in Chapter Three below.

<sup>3</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, ff. 66<sup>r-v</sup>: 'Nota di cittadini di buona qualità e iuditio'. This list includes Zanobi di Lucantonio degli Albizzi.

<sup>4</sup> Appendix A, xiii.



themselves an ascendant place in government dominated by neither the Medici nor the *popolo*, has been one of the most important and abiding themes of the historiography of Florentine political life in the early sixteenth century. Anzilotti long ago sought to explain the overthrow of regimes in Florence and the political instability of the city after 1494 in terms of the desire of the *ottimati* for a dominant role in the regime.<sup>5</sup> More recently Gilbert has shown the importance of Venice in providing an example for the ideal of an aristocratic government expressed in political thought and programmes for reform throughout the period, in the hostility of aristocrats to both popular and Medicean regimes, and in the attempts to establish a form of government in which the *ottimati* were dominant which followed the overthrow of the Medici regime in 1494, of Soderini in 1512, and of the Medici in May 1527.<sup>6</sup>

The idea that the instability of Florentine politics in the early sixteenth century was primarily due to the desire of the *ottimati* for a dominant role in government can be traced back to Donato Giannotti, writing in the 1530s. He argued that those who had overthrown regimes in Florence, ‘converting republics into tyrannies and tyrannies into republics’ were those who were ‘resplendent for their prudence, nobility and riches’, and because they had not been ‘honoured’. In 1494, he declared, the Medici were chased out of the city by the ‘most important and most honoured citizens of Florence’, in 1512 the republic was converted into ‘tyranny’ by the ‘most wise and experienced citizens of repute’, the same ‘in great part’ recovered ‘liberty’ in 1527 and it was ‘ruined’ in 1530 by those same citizens ‘with infinite detriment to the city’.<sup>7</sup>

Yet if the overthrow of regimes would tend to highlight the importance of the *ottimati* and their desire for a dominant role in government in accounting for the instability of Florentine political life, the study of plots emphasizes another side to the story. Most plots sought not the establishment of an aristocratic form of government but rather the re-establishment of the past regime, and were the work of

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<sup>5</sup> A. Anzilotti, *La crisi costituzionale della repubblica fiorentina* (Florence, 1912), pp. 41-81.

<sup>6</sup> F. Gilbert, ‘The Venetian Constitution in Florentine Political Thought’, *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. N. Rubinstein (London, 1968), pp. 477-499.

<sup>7</sup> Giannotti, *Repubblica fiorentina*, p. 134.

those who had always desired its return. The plots of 1497 and 1510 and the *parlamento* of 1512 were the expression of the desire of the Medici's loyal supporters for the restoration of the Medici regime overthrown in 1494. The conspiracy of 1513 and the Giachinotti-Pitti plot of 1527 were the work of those who had always sought the re-establishment of the popular government overthrown in 1512, as was the *Tumulto del Venerdì*.

The exceptions are the plot of 1512 that overthrew Soderini, the conspiracy of 1522 and the plot of Capponi, Vettori and Strozzi in 1526/7. Those involved in the plot of 1512 desired a government in which the *ottimati* were dominant. The plots of 1522 and 1526/7 against the Medici both sought to establish an aristocratic regime in which the *ottimati*, rather than the Medici or the *popolo*, were dominant, and both were the work of former supporters of the Medici regime.

To characterize plots in this way simplifies what was in truth a more complicated picture. Most plots involved both those who had always desired the restoration of the past regime, be it Medicean or popular, and those who desired a form of government in which the *ottimati* were dominant. Those involved in most plots did not share the same aims, or did not share them for the same reasons and what most bound them together was often no more than the desire to overthrow the regime. This has not been recognized before, and with the exception of the plot of 1497, the extent to which those involved in even particular plots had different aims has been largely ignored by modern historians. A full account of the plot of 1497 still remains to be made.<sup>8</sup> Despite these differences, it is clear that most plots sought the re-establishment of the old regime, and were the work of those who had always desired its restoration. This too has not been recognized before, for where historians have looked at the aims of particular conspiracies no attempt has been made to examine or compare the aims of plots in general, against either particular regimes, or through the period as a whole.

Yet an understanding of the extent to which conspiracy was the work of those who had always desired to re-establish the past regime reveals the extent to which the

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<sup>8</sup> Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, p. 13.

political conflict in Florence in the early sixteenth century, was the conflict between supporters of popular government or supporters of the Medici on the one hand and Medicean or popular governments on the other. Plots thus demonstrate the extent to which the instability of Florentine politics in the early-sixteenth century was less the result of the failure of regimes to satisfy the desires of *ottimati* for a dominant role in the regime, than of their failure to extinguish the desire for the restoration of the old regime.

An understanding of the aims of plots helps put into perspective another grand claim concerning political conflict in Florence, that of the prominence of *piagnoni* in opposing the Medici. The followers of Savonarola, it has recently been declared, were the 'rallying point' for opponents of the Medici.<sup>9</sup> The plots do not bear that out, and indeed very few of those involved in conspiracies against the Medici can be found to have had any *piagnone* sympathies at all. Every plot against the Medici expressed above all the desire for a popular or an aristocratic republic rather than a godly one, and it was that same desire that lay behind the young nobles and leading citizens at the forefront of the *Tumulto*. It was supporters of popular government or an aristocratic republic guided by the traditional values of Florentine republicanism, and not followers of Savonarola who were at the forefront of opposition to the Medici, and who provided both its focus and its leadership. As we shall see much later, those who conspired against the Medici sought their inspiration and justification not from Savonarola, but from classical sources and the ancient doctrine of tyrannicide. Supporters or former supporters of Savonarola can be found at the head of conspiracies, but conspiracies against the popular regime, , and aimed to restore the Medici to power. Indeed such individuals provide the best illustration that support for the Medici and hostility to the popular regime did not imply hostility to Savonarola or vice versa.

As in 1522 and of 1526/7, so there had been plots against the Medici in the fifteenth century, such as that of 1460, which aimed to establish an aristocratic

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<sup>9</sup> Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, p. 9.

republic based on the Venetian model.<sup>10</sup> And where after 1512 opponents of the Medici looked back to the popular regime, so in the fifteenth century, in 1466 and in 1494, they had looked back to the regime of before 1434. What was different after 1512 was that plots sought the re-establishment of a popular rather than an oligarchic regime, and were the work of those who had always desired the overthrow of the Medici. By contrast, those who in both 1466 and 1494 looked back to the regime of 1433 had been leading supporters of the Medici regime and sought to re-establish an oligarchic government free of Medici control,<sup>11</sup> and indeed it was to thwart the oligarchic ambitions of some leading citizens in 1494, that others, notably Paolantonio Soderini, had encouraged the creation of the Great Council, with Savonarola's support, to establish a broader-based government of the 'popolo'.<sup>12</sup>

Membership of the Council was essentially restricted to those who themselves or their forbears had previously been eligible to office, and it has now been shown that the establishment of popular government did not alter the social composition of the ruling group in Florence.<sup>13</sup> The real significance of the creation of the Great Council lay in the way in which it changed the forms of political participation, to an extent that has been compared to that of the establishment of the *Signoria* in 1282.<sup>14</sup> The Council was the largest in Florentine history and had powers over legislation and elections to office which gave it an unprecedented control over the executive. The Great Council not only had greater powers than the councils of the Hundred, *Popolo* and Commune that it replaced and which were restored in 1512, its members had such powers for life, where members of the Council of One Hundred

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<sup>10</sup> N. Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici (1434-1494)* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 121-2; Gilbert, 'Venetian Constitution', p. 475.

<sup>11</sup> Butters, *Governors*, p. 21.

<sup>12</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 107, 109; N. Rubinstein, 'Politics and Constitution in Florence at the End of the Fifteenth century', *Italian Renaissance Studies*, ed. E. F. Jacob (London, 1960), pp. 150-9.

<sup>13</sup> R. Pesman Cooper, 'The Florentine Ruling Group under the "governo popolare", 1494-1512', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, New Ser., vii (1985), pp. 71-181; N. Rubinstein, 'Oligarchy and Democracy in Fifteenth-Century Florence', *Florence and Venice: Comparisons and Relations*, ed. S. Bertelli, N. Rubinstein, C. Smythe, i (Florence, 1979), pp. 99-115.

<sup>14</sup> N. Rubinstein, 'Machiavelli and Florentine Republican Experience', *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, ed. G. Block, Q. Skinner and M. Viroli (Cambridge, 1990), p. 15.

sat for terms of six months, and those of the Councils of the *Popolo* and the Commune for terms of four months only.

Plots against the Medici after 1512 testified to the extent to which the creation of the Great Council in 1494 had made the Medici weaker on their return than they had been in the fifteenth century. The most important internal weakness of the Medici regime which encouraged plots against it was the discontent of the *popolo* on account of its desire for the restoration of the Great Council. All plots against the Medici sought to appeal to that discontent, and would not have occurred without it. Having abolished the Great Council, as Machiavelli warned the Pope in 1519, the Medici after 1512 had the mass of political society (*universale*) for its 'enemy', where in the fifteenth century it had been their 'friend', and they were weaker for it.<sup>15</sup> For those who sought to overthrow the Medici knew that by reopening the Council they would have the support of the *popolo*,<sup>16</sup> and no one, as he wrote elsewhere, would ever dare to conspire against a prince if they believed that his death would displease the people.<sup>17</sup> Thus of all the causes of conspiracy against a prince, the 'most important' was the 'universal hatred of the people'.<sup>18</sup>

The very fact of popular government, as well as affection for it, meant that the Medici regime after 1512 was weaker, and the possibility of its overthrow easier, than it had been in the fifteenth century. Alessandro de' Pazzi warned Cardinal Giulio in 1522 that his position was more perilous than that of his ancestors had been because of the 'universal ill-will' on account of the abolition of the Great Council, and because it was seen that 'in any revolution the future government was prepared', that of the Great Council, which 'universally pleases', whereas in Lorenzo's time it had been unclear what would happen should he be overthrown.<sup>19</sup> Thus, as Lodovico Alamanni explained in 1516, where opponents of the Medici before 1494 had faced the difficulty both of overthrowing a regime which the Medici had led for sixty years, and of having to establish a regime that was 'so stable' that the Medici could not

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<sup>15</sup> Machiavelli, 'Discursus', p. 109.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>17</sup> Machiavelli, 'Il Principe', xix, *Opere* (1954), p. 60.

<sup>18</sup> *Idem*, 'Discorsi', III, vi, *Opere* (1954), p. 321.

<sup>19</sup> Pazzi, 'Discorso', pp. 424, 426.

'return and avenge themselves',<sup>20</sup> after 1512, the 'major difficulty' was being able to overthrow the regime, since then was created a 'stable and strong regime against this one'.<sup>21</sup>

In contrast to the Medici regime, the most important weakness of the popular government that encouraged plots against it was the discontent of leading citizens. The plot that overthrew Soderini in 1512 was not only encouraged by the discontent of *ottimati* on account of their desire for an aristocratic form of government, that discontent contributed to its success. Despite their discontent with popular government most leading citizens did not desire the restoration of the Medici, as their lack of support for the *parlamento* in 1512 was to demonstrate, yet conspirators could mistakenly assume that they did so, and be encouraged to plot against the regime on that account.

The plot of 1497 was encouraged by just such a mistaken assumption. The plot was believed at the time to be encouraged by the knowledge that there were many citizens, particularly many 'uomini da bene', discontented with the popular regime and whom Piero thought thus desired his return.<sup>22</sup> Certainly Pucci confessed that Fra Mariano had told him when the friar visited Florence in the summer of 1496 to find support for a possible attempt to restore Piero to the city, that he 'understood universally from everyone he was speaking to that the city was in the worst condition', that 'there was not anyone who was content with this way of governing', and that 'he knew for certain that all these *primi* were discontented with it'.<sup>23</sup> In fact however, Piero had 'few supporters' in the city, Parenti recorded at the time, and the 'primati', who had once been his 'partisans', were divided and had no desire to experience again the 'juvenile appetite' of a man who had lost 'all reputation'.<sup>24</sup>

In terms of domestic developments however, the plot drew its most vital encouragement from the growing strength of Piero's old supporters, rather than the discontent of leading citizens. The most important spur behind the plot was the

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<sup>20</sup> L. Alamanni, 'Discorso ... sopra il fermare lo stato di Firenze nella devozione de' Medici', ed. Albertini, *Staatsbewusstsein*, p. 365.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 366.

<sup>22</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 179; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 132, 138.

<sup>23</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I, 360, f. 16<sup>r</sup>: Examination of Giannozzo Pucci.

<sup>24</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 179.

election as Gonfalonier at the end of February 1497 of Bernardo del Nero, as well as others to the *Signoria* who had been ‘old supporters and partisans’ of Piero, ‘benefited by his family’, and for the ‘old dependencies’ were believed, according to Guicciardini, to support his return to ‘greatness’.<sup>25</sup> Tornabuoni confessed that del Nero’s election, in his judgement, ‘gave courage to all those who desired Piero’s return’, and that very day Pucci and he had sent news of it to Nofri Tornabuoni and Lionardo Bartolini in Rome inciting Piero to ‘put himself in order’, urging that ‘now was the time’ to attend to the ‘affairs and favour of Piero de’ Medici’ and soliciting Piero to come to the city.<sup>26</sup> News of del Nero’s election was greeted with ‘great joy’ in Rome by Piero and Bartolini, and Piero is reported to have declared that since the Gonfalonier and ‘so many of his companions’ supported him, ‘they were enough, in this time’.<sup>27</sup>

The plot was the work of *Bigi*, those who had unwaveringly supported Piero until 1494, and had ever since desired his return. They were discontented with the regime on other grounds, to which Piero appealed, for example, when he sought their support. Niccolò Ridolfi had agreed with Fra Mariano that the city was in ‘bad condition’,<sup>28</sup> and Mariano also lamented with Pucci, according to Pucci’s confession, ‘of the bad state of the city, and that thus it was impossible, by human means, that the city could govern itself in this way’. ‘When Piero returned’, Mariano told Pucci, ‘he would be able to benefit the city’.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, it was Piero’s exile that was the main cause of the conspirators’ resentment with the regime, and his return that they sought above all. No other regime would satisfy them. Tornabuoni for example confessed to the ‘great displeasure’ he had felt on hearing that the imperial expedition of 1496 intended not to return Piero to the city but to make ‘another regime of particular citizens’. For he believed, he confessed, that he was ‘done for, every time that one changed this regime without the return of the sons of Lorenzo de’

<sup>25</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 132, 138; Idem, *Storia d’ Italia*, i, p. 284; Parenti, ‘Storia’, ed. Schnitzer, p. 179.

<sup>26</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, ff. 12<sup>r</sup>, 12<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Lorenzo Tornabuoni; Cei, ‘Storia’, f. 51<sup>r</sup>; ‘Processo di Lamberto dell’ Antella’, pp. vi, x.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., pp. x, xiv.

<sup>28</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 16<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Giannozzo Pucci.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., ff. 14<sup>v</sup>, 16<sup>v</sup>.

Medici'.<sup>30</sup> According to Guicciardini it was said at the time that Lorenzo Tornabuoni had feared that the Great Council would be replaced by a regime headed by the sons of Pierfrancesco de' Medici, his feared and hated enemies, and thus he had conspired in order to forestall this.<sup>31</sup>

There were both supporters and opponents of Savonarola amongst the conspirators, a fact ignored in the only modern account of the plot,<sup>32</sup> and which serves to emphasize that it was the desire for the re-establishment of the Medici regime which was the main cause of their discontent. Niccolò Ridolfi, Giovanni Cambi, Piero Alamanni and Piero Pitti were all opponents of the friar,<sup>33</sup> and indeed at the time of the plot Bernardo del Nero was the leader of Savonarola's opponents in the city.<sup>34</sup> Giannozzo Pucci and Lorenzo Tornabuoni however, were both supporters and defenders of Savonarola, and amongst those who signed a petition in his favour in June 1497.<sup>35</sup> Pucci frequented San Marco in the months before the conspiracy,<sup>36</sup> and had a will drawn up there as Piero prepared to approach the city in April.<sup>37</sup>

Parenti alleges that the leaders of the plot had divided themselves between the two factions in order to deceive,<sup>38</sup> and Nardi was one *piagnone* who believed that Pucci and Tornabuoni could not have been devoted to Savonarola's prophesy or else they would not have attempted to overthrow the Great Council.<sup>39</sup> Savonarola's occasional attacks on the 'tyranny' of the Medici regime before 1494 were no doubt as distasteful to them as that of February 1496 was to Francesco Cegia, another of the conspirators.<sup>40</sup> But there were other reasons why, as Parenti reported in April 1497, under the 'shade' (*ombra*) of religion many 'bigi' and 'partisans of Piero' united with

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., f. 12<sup>r</sup>: Examination of Lorenzo Tornabuoni.

<sup>31</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 143.

<sup>32</sup> Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, pp. 7-16.

<sup>33</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, pp. 211-12; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 443.

<sup>34</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 131.

<sup>35</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 211; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 441.

<sup>36</sup> 'Processo di Fra Silvestro', ed. Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, p. ccxxiii.

<sup>37</sup> L. Polizzotto, "'Dell' Arte del Ben Morire": the "Piagnone" Way of Death 1494-1545', *I Tatti Studies*, iii (1989), p. 34 n. 17.

<sup>38</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 211.

<sup>39</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 130.

<sup>40</sup> F. Cegia, 'I ricordi segreti del medico Francesco di Agostino Cegia (1495-1497)', ed. G. Pampaloni, *A.S.I.*, cxv (1957), p. 222.



Savonarola,<sup>41</sup> not least because the *piagnoni* were less inclined than their *arrabbiati* opponents to persecute Piero's supporters.<sup>42</sup> Pucci confessed to have told Mariano regarding the utility of the French alliance that if it had not been for Savonarola, he would have 'lost all hope'.<sup>43</sup>

Whatever the divisions between them regarding Savonarola, the plotters were united in desiring, as they confessed, to overthrow the regime and readmit Piero to the city, re-establishing the Medici regime of before 1494.<sup>44</sup> Lamberto dell' Antella, hoping for a pardon for having worked with Piero in exile, supplied the *Otto* with what was intended to be a damning picture of Piero's plans if he ever returned to the city, arguing that he would do 'much worse' than the 'bestial blunders, homicides, tyrannies and usurpations' that had originally brought about his downfall.<sup>45</sup> Piero, he said, preferred to return to Florence by means of the Italian powers in order not to have any 'obligation' with citizens and thus to be able 'to tyrannize and do as he wished'. His first act on returning to the city would be to restore secretaries of the Medici family, who had been the target of so much popular anger in 1494, to the most important secretarial positions in the government.<sup>46</sup> Piero often declared, according to dell' Antella, that he would never want the 'counsel of anyone' if he returned to Florence, and that he would sooner desire 'to fail by his own hands and counsel than succeed by the counsel of others'. When it was once put to him that he would be able to make a 'fine regime' in Florence on his return, governing with the 'mature and good counsel of twenty-five or thirty citizens', he replied that he did not want 'the counsel of anyone'.<sup>47</sup>

If there is some truth in such a self-interested hostile account of Piero's ambitions, and one which has been used quite uncritically in the past,<sup>48</sup> those ambitions would not appear to have been shared entirely by the conspirators in

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<sup>41</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 181.

<sup>42</sup> Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, p. xxx: Paolo Somenzi to the Duke of Milan, 29 June 1497.

<sup>43</sup> A.S.F., C.Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 16<sup>r</sup>: Examination of Giannozzo Pucci, 'se non fussi le cose di Fra Hieronimo n' harei perduto ogni speranza'.

<sup>44</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 206.

<sup>45</sup> 'Processo di Lamberto dell' Antella', pp. xii, xvii, xxii.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxi.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxii.

<sup>48</sup> Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, p. 12.

Florence. Whilst they sought the re-establishment of the Medicean regime of before 1494, Piero seems to have thought it necessary to assure them that he had learnt from the past and would govern with their counsel. Pucci confessed that Fra Mariano had assured him in the summer of 1496 that Piero ‘recognized his errors before God and the world’, that he knew he had made ‘infinite errors’ and was now of ‘much better mind’. Mariano had spoken of Piero’s ‘good disposition and mind towards the city and its citizens’ of whom Piero spoke ‘lovingly’, and that ‘he had pledged his faith that if it pleased God that he should ever return to this city he would not perturb any citizen’.<sup>49</sup>

Piero’s reply to the solicitations of Pucci and Tornabuoni in March 1497 encouraged them to seek the support of Niccolò Ridolfi and Bernardo del Nero to whom he sent word that he wanted them to be ‘in place of fathers’, and ‘counsellors in everything he governed’.<sup>50</sup> Ridolfi himself recalled the message that ‘if Piero returned to Florence by the work of Niccolò and Bernardo the government of everything would remain with them, and he would trust the two of them with everything concerning the regime’.<sup>51</sup> Piero had included with his reply a letter addressed to the *Signoria* requesting them to wish to readmit him ‘as their son’.<sup>52</sup>

Almost all those involved in the plot had desired the restoration of the Medici regime since the expulsion of Piero in 1494, but there was one notable exception. Bernardo del Nero’s discontent arose more from his distaste for popular government than from Piero’s exile. Despite the considerable reputation he enjoyed within the popular regime, del Nero was opposed to the Great Council, according to Guicciardini, less for any love he bore for Piero than because he was accustomed to the old regime and did not know how to bring himself to that ‘condition of equality and popularity’ that was necessary in a popular regime, or because he needed to satisfy the wishes of his clients.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi., Ser. I, 360, ff. 14<sup>v</sup>, 16<sup>r</sup>: Examination of Giannozzo Pucci.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., f. 13<sup>r</sup>: Examination of Lorenzo Tornabuoni.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., f. 13<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Niccolò Ridolfi.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., f. 13<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>53</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 143.

Del Nero would have preferred to establish a regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant rather than to restore Piero. Del Nero, Bernardo Rucellai, Guidantonio Vespucci and other opponents of the friar had been hoping, according to Guicciardini, to overthrow the regime and make a 'narrow regime of gentlemen' (*uomini da bene*) with the sons of Pierfrancesco de' Medici at its head, and had even been intriguing with the Duke of Milan to that end.<sup>54</sup> Certainly Ridolfi had informed Fra Mariano in the summer of 1496, according to Pucci's confession, that del Nero was 'in support of Lorenzo and Giovanni de' Medici, together with a good number of citizens', and that he was 'not about to trust Piero'.<sup>55</sup> According to Parenti, del Nero was widely suspected in March 1497 with Vespucci and others of having had 'secret discussions of a new regime' with the Duke of Milan.<sup>56</sup>

Pucci seems to have been of the opinion that del Nero would support Piero's return if the League did, and Piero was to 'behave prudently'.<sup>57</sup> Guicciardini argued that although del Nero's intention was not to readmit Piero but to make the sons of Pierfrancesco de' Medici heads of the regime, he had thought that difficult to accomplish, and having been informed by Niccolò Ridolfi of the plot to readmit Piero, which seemed an easy matter, he had supported the return of Piero in preference to the continuation of the popular regime of the Great Council.<sup>58</sup> Thus it was that del Nero declared, as he and others confessed, that he 'would feel twenty years younger' if Piero returned to the city.<sup>59</sup> Del Nero had desired the return of the Medici because he despaired of ever establishing a regime in which the *ottimati*, rather than the Medici or the *popolo*, were dominant, and believed that the re-establishment of the Medicean regime would at least be better than the continuation of popular government.<sup>60</sup> Most of those involved in the plot however, had always desired the restoration of the Medici, and the conspiracy was above all the expression

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>55</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 16<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Giannozzo Pucci.

<sup>56</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 171.

<sup>57</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 16<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Giannozzo Pucci.

<sup>58</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 143-4.

<sup>59</sup> Cei, 'Storia', ff. 50<sup>v</sup>, 51<sup>r</sup>; A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 14<sup>r</sup>: Examination of Niccolò Ridolfi.

<sup>60</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Dialogo*, p. 5.

of the desire of Piero's loyal supporters for his return, not of leading citizens for a more aristocratic regime.

It was that same desire that seems to have lain behind the plot of 1510. Little is known of the young protagonist, Prinzivalle della Stufa, prior to the plot, except that he had been head of a company of children inspired by Savonarola who had propagated the 'honest life' in adults.<sup>61</sup> His father, Luigi, had been a supporter of Savonarola,<sup>62</sup> and an occasional visitor to San Marco,<sup>63</sup> but as with Pucci and Tornabuoni, such support for Savonarola did not prevent him being a 'partisan' (*partigiano*) of the Medici family, according to one contemporary, by the time of the plot.<sup>64</sup> Indeed Luigi and his son may always have been supporters of the Medici, ever since Luigi had been one of four citizens chosen to guard Lorenzo after the Pazzi plot in 1478,<sup>65</sup> and who, as his intimate companions, had accompanied him everywhere.<sup>66</sup>

The plot was variously understood in Florence. Parenti for example wrote that the plot was the work of 'several' of the 'primati' discontented with popular government who desired a regime in which they were dominant, and who judged that the government would not be changed while the Gonfalonier lived, but would 'easily' be so without him, and thus 'together with the Pope, they thought of removing him from power'.<sup>67</sup> Cambi however, described how the plot aimed to overthrow the Great Council and the popular government and was the work of della Stufa and a 'good number' of 'powerful citizens' who desired to return to the 'tyranny' to which they had been accustomed before 1494.<sup>68</sup>

These views seem to have stemmed from Soderini himself, suspicious that leading citizens were involved, and displeased that the *Otto* were inclined to free della Stufa's father, who was accused of involvement in the plot, or to punish him lightly without examining him further. Seeing that Luigi was being defended by many of the 'primati' who desired to 'overthrow the regime and draw it into their

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<sup>61</sup> A. Gherardi, ed., *Nuovi documenti e studi intorno a Girolamo Savonarola* (Florence, 1887), p. 126.

<sup>62</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 442, 445; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 123.

<sup>63</sup> 'Processo di Fra Silvestro', ed. Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, p. ccxxix.

<sup>64</sup> Anon., 'Diario istorico', f. 87<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 67.

<sup>66</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>67</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 48<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>68</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 248.

own hands', according to Parenti, Soderini sought the support of the 'popolo' to put pressure on the *Otto*. Thus in a speech to the Great Council the Gonfalonier sought to arouse 'envy' and 'hatred' against Prinzivalle and his 'adherents' and emphasized that the plot was aimed not just against himself but against the Great Council and the popular regime.<sup>69</sup> The result according to Cerretani was that amongst the 'popolo' and the 'plebe' it was said that many 'noble citizens' and 'leading citizens of the leading families' (*primi cittadini delle prime chese*) had known of the plot, and there was a desire to punish them.<sup>70</sup> There was talk, Cerretani reports, of burning and sacking the houses of those who did not like the popular regime, and of killings and executions to save the city.<sup>71</sup>

Only Prinzivalle della Stufa was found to have been involved, and many contemporaries, including Cerretani and Nardi, thought it extremely improbable that della Stufa had found any accomplices amongst any men of 'great importance'.<sup>72</sup> Whatever the truth of the matter, it is clear that della Stufa desired to re-establish the Medici regime rather than to establish an aristocratic form of government, and that he did so because he was a loyal partisan of the Medici 'faction' (*fazione pallesca*), as Lorenzo Strozzi described him.<sup>73</sup> For della Stufa was to be a fervent supporter of and indeed a participant in the forcing of the *parlamento* in 1512.

While the plots of 1497 and 1510 were the expression of the desire of partisans of the Medici for the re-establishment of the Medici regime the plot that successfully overthrew Soderini in 1512 was more the expression of the desire of *ottimati* for a more dominant role in the regime. Modern historians have largely neglected the aims of the young men involved in Soderini's overthrow, and have assumed, as did Guicciardini,<sup>74</sup> that they all desired the restoration of the Medici regime,<sup>75</sup> and urged and supported the forcing of the *parlamento*.<sup>76</sup> However, this

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<sup>69</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 45<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>70</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 404; Idem, *Ricordi*, p. 235.

<sup>71</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 237; Idem, *Storia*, p. 402.

<sup>72</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 237; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 17.

<sup>73</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', pp. xxv, xxvi.

<sup>74</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, pp. 231, 233, 234.

<sup>75</sup> Pesman Cooper, 'Caduta', pp. 225, 252; Eadem, 'Pier Soderini', p. 109; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. 60.

<sup>76</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, p. 60; Butters, *Governors*, p. 166; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. 67.

was not the case. Cerretani described how the ‘leaders’ of Soderini’s overthrow divided almost as soon as the Gonfalonier had departed the city. One part wanted only to be rid of Soderini, the other, who included Giovanni Rucellai, wanted to make a new regime, headed by the Medici.<sup>77</sup> Cerretani may have been referring to a split amongst all those in favour of Soderini’s overthrow, rather than amongst those directly responsible for it, yet it is clear that the young men themselves were divided, not just those who supported them. In a letter of 1513 to Paolo Vettori, his brother, Francesco, recalled that where Paolo had supported it, Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi and Bartolomeo Valori were ‘opposed’ (*alieni*) to the *parlamento*.<sup>78</sup>

These were the three men, as Francesco explained, who were most responsible for Soderini’s overthrow.<sup>79</sup> That two of them would seem to have supported the reform of 7 September is a testament to the extent to which the overthrow of Soderini, and the conspiracy that preceded it were the work of those who desired not to re-establish the Medici regime, but to establish an aristocratic regime in which the *ottimati* rather than the Medici or the *popolo* were dominant. For that is what was established by the reform of 7 September. The Medici were readmitted to the city as private citizens, and while the Great Council was maintained, the creation of a new Senate of a hundred and fifty or so life members to control fiscal policy and elect the most important magistracies established a ‘*stato de’ primati*’ as Niccolò Capponi described it at the time, whereby three quarters of the ‘*popolo*’ were deprived of the control of the regime.<sup>80</sup>

Nardi argued that Albizzi had become ‘affectionate’ of the Medici on account of the favour the Cardinal had done him in Rome concerning a law suit,<sup>81</sup> and a letter survives of November 1511 from Valori to the Cardinal requesting his help on behalf of one Ser Vettorino di Lorenzo Ceccherini in regard to certain benefices in Arezzo.<sup>82</sup> These two leaders of Soderini’s overthrow had clearly emerged from that group of

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<sup>77</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, pp. 48-9.

<sup>78</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I, 136, f. 219<sup>v</sup>: Francesco Vettori to Paolo Vettori, 5 August 1513; cf. ‘Raccolto delle azioni’, p. 269.

<sup>79</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I, 136, ff. 216<sup>v</sup>, 219<sup>v</sup>: Francesco Vettori to Paolo Vettori, 26 June, 5 August 1513.

<sup>80</sup> Butters, *Governors*, p. 181 n. 65.

<sup>81</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 15.

<sup>82</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I, 6, n. 129: Letter of 15 November 1511.

discontented citizens later described by Cerretani. These were men from families that had always been powerful in the republic, who had been freshly benefited by the Medici, and who wanted to be rid of Soderini and the primacy of the Great Council by means of the return of the Medici, but who would have wanted the Medici to return to Florence only 'as citizens'.<sup>83</sup>

Following Soderini's departure from the Palace, Albizzi and the other leaders of the coup had joined with Palla and Giovanni Rucellai and other 'young men' to seize control of the Palace and force the necessary magistrates to depose the Gonfalonier, and create new ambassadors to the Viceroy with full commission to readmit the Medici to the city.<sup>84</sup> If Albizzi and Valori desired to establish an aristocratic regime with the Medici as private citizens, most of those who had taken up arms to guard the Palace, those 'young princes of the revolt', as Cerretani described them, do seem to have desired the overthrow of the Great Council and the re-establishment of Medicean leadership of the regime, and to have been discontented with the reforms of 7 September as a result.<sup>85</sup> According to Cerretani, almost all those young men who had seized arms after Soderini had left the Palace were involved in forcing the *parlamento* on 16 September.<sup>86</sup>

Certainly many of those involved in the coup against Soderini can be found to have supported and been involved in the *parlamento*. One account describes how when they seized the Palace the leaders of the coup were accompanied by 'young men' of the Rucellai, Tornabuoni, Pitti, Bartoli, Corbinelli, and Buondelmonti families with 'other relatives and followers of the Medici'.<sup>87</sup> According to Cerretani, the 'leaders' of those 'supporters' of the Medici who urged them to force a *parlamento* and make themselves 'lords' (*signori*) of Florence, included the Tornabuoni, Giovanni and Palla Rucellai, and Filippo Buondelmonti,<sup>88</sup> whose son,

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<sup>83</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, pp. 396-7.

<sup>84</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 29<sup>r</sup>: Jacopo Guicciardini to Francesco Guicciardini, 3 September, 1512; *Ibid.*, Ser. III, 178, f. 67<sup>r</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Lorenzo Strozzi, 2 September 1512; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 280; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 309.

<sup>85</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 281; *Idem*, *Storia*, p. 444.

<sup>86</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 286-7.

<sup>87</sup> Anon., 'Diario istorico', f. 94<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>88</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 282-3.

Benedetto, was involved in the coup,<sup>89</sup> and supported the *parlamento*.<sup>90</sup> The sons of Luca di Maso degli Albizzi, and both Matteo and Cosimo Bartoli were also involved in the coup,<sup>91</sup> and supported the *parlamento*.<sup>92</sup> Thus while not all the leaders of Soderini's overthrow desired with Vettori and the Rucellai to restore the Medici to power, most of their accomplices did.

As were the conspirators of 1497, most of those who successfully pressed the Medici to force a *parlamento* were long-standing partisan supporters of the Medici, such as the Tornabuoni, who had always desired their return. As in 1497, they wanted the re-establishment of those constitutional structures and electoral controls of the Medici regime of before 1494 that would guarantee them the dominant place in the regime. Prinzivalle della Stufa, who was one of those 'amici' of the Medici who took over the Palace on 16 September described a week later how it had been decided to force a *parlamento* in order to 'make a government of all our friends'.<sup>93</sup> Paolo Vettori was to advise the Cardinal a few months later that the counsel of leading citizens of the former popular regime could not be relied upon, and Giuliano should be advised by twelve trusted but unambitious friends of the Medici who would remain loyal whatever 'the fortunes of your house'.<sup>94</sup> Francesco Vettori later described how the Medici were persuaded to make a *parlamento* by 'those elder citizens' who remembered the time of Lorenzo and thought that the government was not 'arranged to their purpose'.<sup>95</sup> The Medici were urged, according to Baldovinetti, 'to govern themselves properly and in the manner of Lorenzo their father',<sup>96</sup> and not just for their own sake and that of their supporters, but for the sake of the city. Young partisans reminded the Cardinal, according to Cerretani, that they were the sons of those who

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<sup>89</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz. Ser. I, 360, f. 29<sup>r</sup>: Jacopo to Francesco Guicciardini, 3 September 1512; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 309.

<sup>90</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 157<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>91</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz. Ser. I, 360, f. 29<sup>r</sup>: Jacopo to Francesco Guicciardini, 3 September 1512; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 309.

<sup>92</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 287. On the Bartoli see Appendix A, iv.

<sup>93</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xv, col. 141: Prinzivalle della Stufa to Piero da Bibbiena, 23 September 1512.

<sup>94</sup> P. Vettori, 'Ricordi', ed. Albertini, *Staatsbewusstsein*, p. 346.

<sup>95</sup> Vettori, 'Sommario', p. 293; 'Raccolto delle azioni', p. 269.

<sup>96</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 156<sup>v</sup>.



with Lorenzo had made the city 'great and regarded', but who had since 'badly maintained it'.<sup>97</sup>

Those pressing the Medici for a *parlamento* were under no illusion that the majority of citizens, including the *primi*, had no wish for it, and it was the fear that citizens had of the Spanish army, rather than any discontent with the new regime, that encouraged them. Nevertheless, they sought to persuade the Cardinal, according to Cerretani, that although they were few that would be no impediment to establishing a new regime, for it was 'always' the case that the overthrow of regimes was the work of a few, after which the rest were always pushed by 'ambition' and 'avarice' to desire to be friends with the regime that was governing the city. They would do so even more readily in the case of a regime that could 'help its citizens extraordinarily', which help the Florentines needed and desired on account of the large number of citizens who were 'poor'.<sup>98</sup> The partisans further argued, according to Cerretani, that the re-establishment of the Medicean regime as before 1494 could satisfy both the desire of ordinary citizens for office and that of the *primi* for 'dignity', positions in the Seventy and the most important magistracies. After all, it had done so for sixty years, and Florentines were accustomed to such a regime.<sup>99</sup>

If this was a fair reflection of the thoughts of most of those who urged the Medici to force a *parlamento*, there were those who seem to have judged that the Medici would need to be more forceful and more powerful than their fifteenth-century predecessors. Certainly Paolo Vettori for example, was to seek to impress upon the Cardinal within a few months of the *parlamento* that the memory of the last ten years, in which the city had been 'most content', would 'always make war' on him. Thus while his ancestors had held the regime with 'more industry than force', he needed to use 'more force than industry' because he had 'more enemies' and 'less means to satisfy them'. Unable to regain their support, the Medici needed to ensure that their enemies were 'afraid' to harm them. Such 'terror' was to be maintained by a military force guarding the city.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 54.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>100</sup> P. Vettori, 'Ricordi', ed. Albertini, *Staatsbewusstsein*, p. 345.

Clearly the overthrow of Soderini was in part, and the *parlamento* mainly so, the result of the desire of long-standing partisans of the Medici for a more partisan regime, rather than of the desire of leading citizens for an aristocratic regime in which they were dominant. However, there were those involved in the overthrow of Soderini and the *parlamento* who had not always desired the restoration of the Medici regime, but who did so in 1512 on account of their discontent with Soderini and the popular government. Filippo Buondelmonti for example, is recorded by both Baldovinetti and Guicciardini to have been a ‘capital enemy’ of the Medici since before 1494, but to have been reconciled with them in 1506 on account of his enmity with Soderini.<sup>101</sup> That was also the case with the Rucellai and their closest associates from the Rucellai gardens, and it is clear that their desire to restore the Medici stemmed from a desire for a regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant. Aspects of the political thought of the Rucellai circle are now well-known,<sup>102</sup> but the reasons for their involvement in both the overthrow of Soderini and the *parlamento*, and how their aims differed from those of others involved in the events of 1512, has been wholly ignored in modern accounts, and is worth examining in some detail.<sup>103</sup>

Amongst those Cerretani named with Palla and Giovanni Rucellai as the leaders of those urging the Medici to force a *parlamento* were Piero Martelli, Giovanni Corsi and Francesco da Diacceto,<sup>104</sup> all of whom had attended the famous meetings from 1503 to 1506 in the Rucellai gardens, where Soderini, as we shall see, was routinely criticized.<sup>105</sup> In December 1500 both the Rucellai and Martelli, with Bartolomeo Valori, were amongst those ‘principal enemies’ of the Medici whose concern that Piero was about to attempt an advance on the city led to their choosing four of their number to ‘watch the affairs and the supporters of Piero’.<sup>106</sup> However, in 1509 Guicciardini reported that both Martelli and Corsi were amongst those ‘young gentlemen’ whose fathers and families had been enemies of the Medici in 1494 but

<sup>101</sup> Baldovinetti, ‘Memoriale’, f. 156<sup>r</sup>; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 325.

<sup>102</sup> Gilbert, ‘Bernardo Rucellai’, pp. 120-3.

<sup>103</sup> Butters, *Governors*, pp. 166-7; Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 60-1, 64; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. 67.

<sup>104</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 282-3.

<sup>105</sup> G. Gelli, *Opere*, ed. A. Alesina (Naples, 1970), p. 496. The meetings are discussed in Chapter Four below.

<sup>106</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 13.

who at some time between the death of Piero de' Medici in 1503 and the trial of Piero Pitti in March 1506 had 'publicly' visited the Medici in Rome, and seemed to become their 'friends'. Valori, Gino Capponi, and Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, three of the leaders of the plot against Soderini, were also amongst their number, according to Guicciardini, encouraged by the lack of action taken by Soderini against those consorting with the Medici in Rome.<sup>107</sup> Guicciardini was unsure whether the purpose of these visits was to 'spite' the Gonfalonier, or because they desired to readmit the Medici to the city, but he was clear that it was either discontent with the Great Council, or with Soderini's behaviour that drove them.<sup>108</sup>

It was at this time too, that the Rucellai, together with their father, Bernardo, were reconciled with the Medici, and may even have conspired with them, on account of their greater hatred of the Gonfalonier.<sup>109</sup> The Rucellai, according to Guicciardini, desired to restore the Medici because of a private enmity their family had held with Soderini since before he was Gonfalonier due to certain 'slights' (*sdegni*) to Bernardo, and more particularly because of their 'impatience' with the 'equality' of popular government.<sup>110</sup> When Bernardo left for Venice in 1506, both Corsi and da Diacceto gave sympathetic accounts of his departure from the city which he detested, they wrote, as if it were a 'wicked' and 'savage' stepmother, both bemoaning the 'calamitous condition' of the city and lambasting the popular regime for its oppression of leading citizens.<sup>111</sup> 'The optimates are attacked and derided by the populace', wrote Corsi;<sup>112</sup> the 'nobility', wrote da Diacceto, especially those educated in the 'good arts', were continually subjected to 'envy', and 'insults and injury'.<sup>113</sup>

Clearly both for the Rucellai and the other leaders of the overthrow of Soderini it was above all their discontent with popular government and desire to

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<sup>107</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 324.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 323-4.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 285, 325.

<sup>110</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 229; *Idem*, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 284.

<sup>111</sup> Gilbert, 'Bernardo Rucellai', p. 120 and n. 1; P.O. Kristeller, *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* (Rome, 1956), pp. 176-7 and n. 9, 303 and n. 61. Some useful remarks can be found in W. McCuaig, 'Bernardo Rucellai and Sallust', *Rinascimento*, Ser. 2, xxii (1982), p. 75.

<sup>112</sup> Corsi, *Vita Ficini*, in Kristeller, *Studies*, p. 177 n. 9.

<sup>113</sup> Da Diacceto, *De amore*, in Gilbert, 'Bernardo Rucellai', p. 120 n. 1.

secure a dominant position for the *ottimati*, rather than simply with the Gonfalonier, which led them to conspire with the Medici against the regime. Soderini's overthrow was thus above all the expression of discontent with the settlement of 1494 rather than with events since 1502. However, that discontent had led Albizzi and Valori to desire to establish an aristocratic regime with the Medici as private citizens, and thus the question remains as to why by contrast it led the Rucellai, Giovanni Corsi and their associates to desire to restore the Medici to power and to urge the Medici to force a *parlamento* and overthrow the aristocratic regime of 7 September.

The reason was that unlike Valori, Albizzi and other supporters of the reform of 7 September the Rucellai believed that an aristocratic regime was not incompatible with Medici leadership, but that it was incompatible with the Great Council. The split between the leaders of Soderini's overthrow in 1512 was a split between two different visions of an aristocratic regime. Corsi had contrasted the 'calamity' of the era of popular government with the Athenian age of Lorenzo, when the 'good arts and disciplines', generosity, modesty and restraint were dominant. In the present however, 'ignorance and stupidity', avarice, ambition and luxury were dominant in the city, 'from where are exiled, together with the Medici, the disciplines of all the good arts and the best institutions of our forefathers'.<sup>114</sup> In a dedicatory letter to Cosimo de' Pazzi of 1508 Corsi praised the qualities and achievements of Lorenzo as an example to other citizens.<sup>115</sup> Pietro Crinito, another member of the Rucellai circle, had praised Lorenzo in 1504 as a man 'who governed the Florentine republic no less with counsel than with fortune'.<sup>116</sup>

Thus the Rucellai and their associates argued that a dominant role for the *ottimati* had been better secured in the Laurentian regime than under the popular government. Moreover, they evidently shared Bernardo Rucellai's vision of an aristocratic government in which there could be no place for the Great Council. Bernardo had been one of the leaders of the 'primi' behind the reform of 2 December 1494 that re-established the constitution of before 1434, and had opposed the creation

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<sup>114</sup> Corsi, *Vita Ficini*, in Kristeller, *Studies*, pp. 176 n. 8, 177 n. 9.

<sup>115</sup> Kristeller, *Studies*, pp. 177, 180; C. Dionisotti, *Machiavellerie* (Turin, 1980), p. 142 n. 23.

<sup>116</sup> P. Crinito, *De honesta disciplina*, in Gilbert, 'Bernardo Rucellai', p. 120 n.3.

of the Great Council.<sup>117</sup> Ten years later Bernardo described for his son, Palla, how his attempt to establish an oligarchic regime had failed and the city had embraced a popular and ‘more lax form of government’ which he had sought thereafter to persuade it to relinquish.<sup>118</sup> Bernardo had restated his vision of the best regime for Florence during the years of his exile in his *De bello Italico*, in which he blames Piero for the events of 1494, for having governed without the counsel of *ottimati*, unlike Lorenzo had done.<sup>119</sup> The best government, which was perceived to exist in Venice, is presented as an aristocratic regime with a monarchical head, in which popular elements played no part.<sup>120</sup> Corsi praised the Laurentian regime believing that it had mixed monarchical and aristocratic elements without popular ones in precisely that way.<sup>121</sup>

Clearly the Rucellai and their associates urged the Medici to force a *parlamento* and overthrow the aristocratic regime of 7 September believing that a dominant role for the *ottimati* could be better secured with the restoration of the Medici and the abolition of the Great Council. And it was evident to supporters of the Council, such as Piero Parenti, that with its abolition and the creation of the *Balia* of fifty-five citizens, the *parlamento* had ‘taken government out of the hands of the mass of political society and placed it in that of the optimates’.<sup>122</sup> Two days after the forcing of the *parlamento* in which he had been involved, Palla Rucellai wrote on his father’s behalf to Lorenzo Strozzi about the ‘success’ of their affairs which had ‘had a lot of trouble’ in coming finally to a government that was ‘less popular and less French’, in order to content the League. The authority of the city, he wrote, was now in the hands of sixty ‘gentlemen’.<sup>123</sup> Bernardo Rucellai himself added that ‘matters

<sup>117</sup> F. Guicciardini, pp. 106, 107, 109, 284.

<sup>118</sup> B. Rucellai, *De urbe Roma*, in Gilbert, ‘Bernardo Rucellai’, p. 109 n. 1. See also the useful remarks in W. McCuaig, ‘Bernardo Rucellai’, pp. 89-94.

<sup>119</sup> E. Giusberti, ‘Un mito del Cinquecento: Lorenzo il Magnifico’, *Bulletino dell’ Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo e Archivio Muratoriano*, xci (1984), pp. 220-5.

<sup>120</sup> Gilbert, ‘Venetian Constitution’, p. 483.

<sup>121</sup> Idem, ‘Bernardo Rucellai’, p. 123.

<sup>122</sup> Parenti, ‘Storia’, II IV 171, f. 82<sup>v</sup>: ‘trassasi al reggimento di mano allo universalità e ridussasi nelli ottimati’.

<sup>123</sup> B.N.F., Magl. VIII, cod. 1487, ins. 84, f. 1<sup>r</sup>: Bernardo Rucellai to Lorenzo Strozzi, 18 September 1512, ‘el successo di queste nostre chose ... hanno penato assai a venire a quello che era necessario per contentare la Legha di governo manco popolare e mancho franzese. Hora l’ autorità di tucta la città si è ridocta in circha sessanta homini da bene’. This letter was first brought to attention in Stephens,

are in the very best order, both for the *uomini da bene* and for our friends'.<sup>124</sup>

Seeking to secure a dominant role for the *ottimati* rather than a party-based regime, the Rucellai evidently did not share the displeasure with the composition of the *Balia* felt, according to Cerretani, by most of those involved in the *parlamento*, who believed that it did not meet the needs of either the Medici or their 'trusted friends'.<sup>125</sup>

Despite the involvement of the Rucellai however, the *parlamento* was above all the expression of the desire of long-standing partisans of the Medici for the re-establishment of the Medici and a partisan regime, and it did not have the support, as those involved well-knew, of the vast majority of *ottimati*. Yet if the restoration of the Medici to power was not primarily the result of the desire of *ottimati* for a dominant position in the regime, the plot that brought the Medici to the city and overthrew Soderini was, and was also encouraged by the discontent of those leading citizens who desired an aristocratic regime and were behind the reforms of 7 September. Here again it is evident how it was above all discontent with popular government rather than simply with Soderini himself, which led to his overthrow.

There were many citizens 'and all of them powerful', as Baldovinetti recalled, discontented both with Soderini 'on many counts', and with the institution of the Gonfalonier for life.<sup>126</sup> The reform eloquently expressed that discontent of leading citizens with the extent of Soderini's 'greatness and authority'.<sup>127</sup> The term of the Gonfalonier was reduced to one year to prevent the dominant position achieved by Soderini and to allow greater opportunity for the *primi* to obtain the dignity of the

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*Fall*, p. 63, where it is quoted at length. However, Palla Rucellai's involvement in its composition, which is not acknowledged, as well as what is known from other sources of the attitude of the Rucellai towards both the Great Council and the Medici, clearly suggest that the letter cannot bear the interpretation which is placed upon it. Contrary to assertions in Stephens, *Fall*, p. 62, Cerretani presents no evidence that Bernardo Rucellai sought to dissuade the Medici from forcing the *parlamento* when he visited the Cardinal on 15 September. See Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 286; Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 57; Idem, *Storia*, p. 447.

<sup>124</sup> B.N.F., Magl. VIII, cod. 1487, ins. 84, f. 1<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>125</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 59.

<sup>126</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 155<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>127</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 125.

office.<sup>128</sup> Above all however, the reform expressed that discontent felt by some leading citizens with the popular government ever since its institution in 1494. A Senate had been proposed in both 1494 and in the discussions of reform in 1501 and 1502 which had resulted in the creation of a Gonfalonier for life.<sup>129</sup> Leading citizens such as the Salviati had hoped that would lead to the creation of a Senate, and the main cause of their discontent with Soderini was that it had not done so.

The divisions that resulted, lamented Guicciardini, were the 'origin and principal reason' for the return of the Medici.<sup>130</sup> For those citizens of 'great authority' opposed to Soderini, whilst not desiring the return of the Medici, no longer sought to persecute or impede, as they had done in the past, those who consorted with the Medici. Indeed, in order to reduce Soderini's authority, they even sought to demonstrate support for the restoration of the Medici to power. This not only encouraged those who were 'truly' the Medici's supporters, who were not of much importance, to hope for their return, but also encouraged many 'young nobles' to seek the overthrow of the regime by means of the restoration of the Medici.<sup>131</sup> Moreover, the discontent of the Salviati and other leading citizens on account of their desire for a Senate helped to render the Gonfalonier and the popular government incapable of proceeding against the conspirators, as we shall see, and contributed to their success.

Within two months of the Medici's return to power, Boscoli and Capponi had hatched a plot to overthrow the government, knowing, they are reported to have confessed, that the Medici regime 'did not please anyone'.<sup>132</sup> This first plot against the Medici, as the first against the popular government, in 1497, aimed to re-establish

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<sup>128</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 444.

<sup>129</sup> R. Pesman Cooper, 'L' elezione di Pier Soderini a gonfaloniere a vita', *A.S.I.*, cxxv (1967), pp. 145-85; Gilbert, 'Venetian Constitution', pp. 477-485; S. Bertelli, 'Petrus Soderinus Patriae Parens', *Bibliothèque d' humanisme et renaissance*, xxxi (1969), pp. 95-8; Idem, 'Pier Soderini', pp. 335-8; Idem, 'Constitutional Reforms in Renaissance Florence', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, iii (1973), pp. 139-64; G. Cadoni, 'La crisi istituzionale della repubblica fiorentina, 1499-1502', *Bulletino dell' Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo e Archivio Muratoriano*, xcix (1994), pp. 341-405.

<sup>130</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, pp. 125, 235.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 125-6.

<sup>132</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 75.

the old regime, and was the work of those who had loyally supported the past regime until its overthrow. Boscoli and Capponi both seem to have been supporters of Soderini and the popular regime, and to have desired the restoration of the popular government with Soderini as Gonfalonier, a fact ignored in modern accounts.<sup>133</sup> Biliotti confessed that in conversations with him Boscoli had often spoken 'in favour of Soderini and of the other regime', and had occasionally entered a 'long fantasy' saying that 'he preferred the popular regime much more' than the present Medicean one, and that it was 'the best government'.<sup>134</sup> Niccolò Valori was recorded in 1509 to have been one of those 'men of authority' who ordinarily supported the Gonfalonier.<sup>135</sup> Giovanni Folchi had accepted a commission to aid the defence of Prato in August 1512,<sup>136</sup> and Valori had also done all he could to oppose the Viceroy's demands for Soderini's deposition and the return of the Medici. He recounted in his *Ricordanze* at the time of the plot that as an orator to the Viceroy in August 1512 he had never agreed to the return of the Medici as private citizens, 'knowing that they could not remain private for infinite reasons', and thus he had considered that the deposition of Soderini and the return of the Medici as private citizens in August 1512, had placed the city 'in a manifest servitude'.<sup>137</sup>

Boscoli is sometimes assumed to have been a follower of Savonarola,<sup>138</sup> based on Luca della Robbia's testimony that Boscoli admired Savonarola's approach to death and sought the counsel of a friar from San Marco on the night before his execution, although della Robbia also records that Boscoli did not frequent San Marco,<sup>139</sup> and Polizzotto found no evidence that Boscoli was a Savonarolan.<sup>140</sup> According to Biliotti however, Boscoli declared that 'this government was not about to last, founding itself on great expenditure, and on vices and similar matters', and that he preferred the popular regime to the Medici because it was guided by

<sup>133</sup> Ridolfi, *Machiavelli*, pp. 135-6; Butters, *Governors*, pp. 210-1.

<sup>134</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., XCVII, n. 269: Examination of Pandolfo Biliotti.

<sup>135</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 271-2, 299.

<sup>136</sup> C. Guasti, ed., *Il sacco di Prato*, (Bologna, 1880), ii, p. 75.

<sup>137</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 17<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>138</sup> D. Cantimori, 'Il caso del Boscoli e la vita del Rinascimento', *Giornale Critico della Filosofia Italiana*, viii (1927), p. 248; Ridolfi, *Machiavelli*, p. 135.

<sup>139</sup> Della Robbia, 'Recitazione', pp. 288, 295-7.

<sup>140</sup> Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, p. 238 n. 279.



‘religion’, was ‘without sodomy’, and did not tolerate ‘vices’.<sup>141</sup> Such enthusiasm for the moral aspects of popular government suggests that Boscoli may have had *piagnone* sympathies. Yet Boscoli was a well-known student of ‘letters’,<sup>142</sup> and it was Aristotle’s *Politics* which he was accustomed to read with Giovanni Folchi, a fact considered significant enough by Folchi’s examiners to be recorded, with the explanation that the work ‘speaks of the government of cities’.<sup>143</sup> If Boscoli supported Savonarola’s vision for the city at all, his preference for popular government was largely guided by classical republican values, and it was from these, as we shall see, that he sought the inspiration and justification for his deeds.

Capponi seems to have been an opponent of Savonarola, at least he had been condemned in 1495 with Doffo Spini, head of the violently anti-Savonarolan *Compagnacci*, and twenty-three others for gambling,<sup>144</sup> and Cosimo de’ Pazzi had certainly been an opponent of Savonarola.<sup>145</sup> Niccolò Valori however, was a supporter of the friar,<sup>146</sup> and shortly after the plot he recalled in his *Ricordanze* the ‘wicked iniquity’ of the burning of Savonarola, whom he described as the ‘light of his times, for religion, doctrine and sanctity’.<sup>147</sup> He went on to describe the overthrow of the popular regime in Savonarolan terms, that following the ‘most violent’ *parlamento* the Medici had created the *Balia*, an ‘impious deed, outside of every promise’ and thus ‘liberty was subsumed under their will’.<sup>148</sup>

While both the leaders of the plot and the two others condemned desired the re-establishment of the popular regime as it existed in August 1512, with Piero Soderini as Gonfalonier for life, Cosimo de’ Pazzi almost certainly did not. The extent of his involvement is unclear, but it is clear, as Cerretani records, that Pazzi,

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<sup>141</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., XCVII, n. 269: Examination of Pandolfo Biliotti.

<sup>142</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 5; Della Robbia, ‘Recitazione’, p. 284.

<sup>143</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., LXXXIX, n. 38: Examination of Giovanni Folchi.

<sup>144</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 102, f. 312<sup>r</sup> (December 1495). See also, A. Verde, ‘Questioni savonaroliani aperti. A proposito della pubblicazione di “Le Giornate” di Lorenzo Violi’, *Memorie Domenicane*, New. Ser., xviii (1987), p. 379.

<sup>145</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 445.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 442.

<sup>147</sup> N. Valori, ‘Ricordanze’, f. 17<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 17<sup>v</sup>.

Archbishop of Florence, was one of those who had wanted rid of Soderini as Gonfalonier, had worked for the Pope in his conflicts with the city, and had left the city a few days before the coup, afraid of the wrath of the 'popolo'.<sup>149</sup> Pazzi had supported the return of the Medici, according to Cerretani, but he wanted them as 'citizens' not as 'Signori' and thus he was aggrieved at the *parlamento*, and the 'greatness' of the Medici, and it was for this reason that he had supported the plot.<sup>150</sup> Cerretani recorded that as early as December 1512 Pazzi and other members of his family were publicly declaring that the Medici should live 'as citizens', and that they would have wanted the Medici to return only 'as citizens'.<sup>151</sup>

Baldovinetti similarly recorded how Pazzi had grieved that 'he was the reason that the Medici returned to Florence, through removing Piero Soderini from the Palace', for which he and the others responsible were now full of regret, since he had not desired that the Medici should make themselves 'so great'. According to Baldovinetti, Pazzi was said to have supported the plot because he had not wanted the Medici to be 'greater' than other citizens. Indeed Baldovinetti reported that for the same reason other 'grand citizens' had also supported the plot, but that 'for less harm' the whole of the conspiracy had not been sought out because it was 'too great an affair'.<sup>152</sup> Whatever Pazzi's desires however, the leading members of the plot of 1513 sought the re-establishment of Soderini and the popular government of August 1512 which they had loyally supported until its overthrow.

By contrast the plot of 1522 was mainly the work of former supporters of the Medici, who sought to establish a regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant. However, that was clearly not the only or even the main aim of most of the participants, and the plot was no more united than other conspiracies of the period, for some of those involved desired the re-establishment of the popular regime

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<sup>149</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 48; Idem, *Storia*, p. 443. See also Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 79<sup>v</sup>; Nardi, *Istorie*, i, pp. 479-82.

<sup>150</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 300, 303; Idem, *Dialogo*, pp. 61, 80.

<sup>151</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 296; Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 71; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 27.

<sup>152</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 160<sup>r</sup>.

overthrown in 1512 and had always done so. It is both these aspects in particular that have received little or no attention in modern accounts.<sup>153</sup>

As in 1513 the conspirators aimed to restore Piero Soderini to his former position in the city, and to re-establish the Great Council,<sup>154</sup> but they did not seek the unmodified re-establishment of the popular regime as it had existed in 1512. According to the confession of Niccolò Martelli, Buondelmonti planned not only to restore Soderini as Gonfalonier for life, but also to create a new office of eight citizens to serve for terms of three years, whose consent would be required to all decisions made by the Gonfalonier and the *Signoria*. The first eight were to be men deemed suitable by the plotters and were to include Buondelmonti himself, one of the Soderini, and perhaps Luigi Alamanni, as well as Niccolò Capponi and Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, one of the leaders of the overthrow of Soderini in 1512. Thus, Martelli concluded, 'little by little they wanted to transform the Florentine government into one like that of the Venetians'.<sup>155</sup> That almost certainly meant the introduction of a Senate by which the *ottimati*, as was perceived to be the case in Venice, would have control of the regime.<sup>156</sup> The establishment of a 'government of the optimates', through the creation of a Senate of a hundred life members that would elect the most important magistracies and control fiscal policy had been explicitly compared to Venice in a proposal for reform put forward in April 1522 by Alessandro de' Pazzi.<sup>157</sup> Buondelmonti and della Palla were both to support Capponi's efforts during the last republic to establish a more aristocratic regime.<sup>158</sup>

Antonio Brucioli was one conspirator however, who would probably have preferred a more popular and less aristocratic regime than that envisaged by Buondelmonti. In his *Dialogi* published in 1526 Brucioli dismisses oligarchic rule whether by the rich, 'stato di pochi', or the virtuous, 'stato di ottimati', as well as rule by the poor, 'stato popolare e infimo', in favour of rule by the 'multitude', by the

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<sup>153</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 120-1; Hauvette, *Luigi Alamanni*, pp. 29-32; G. Silvano, 'Vivere civile' e 'governo misto' a Firenze nel primo Cinquecento (Bologna, 1985), p. 158.

<sup>154</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 177<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>155</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', p. 245.

<sup>156</sup> Gilbert, 'Venetian Constitution', pp. 487-9; Silvano, 'Vivere civile', pp. 142-151.

<sup>157</sup> Pazzi, 'Discorso', pp. 429-31.

<sup>158</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 119.

'mediocri' who were neither rich nor poor, of which Venice was held up as an example.<sup>159</sup> It is a measure of the hold exercised by the internal stability of Venice over the Florentine political imagination in these years, that advocates of both popular republicanism such as Brucioli, of an aristocratic republic with a popular base of the Great Council, such as Buondelmonti, as well as those such as the Rucellai who sought an aristocratic regime in which popular elements played no part, could all claim inspiration and justification from the Venetian model.

Battista della Palla later claimed that when he had sought French help on behalf of the conspiracy he had presented the King's sister, Marguerite of Anjou, with a portrait of Savonarola, some manuscripts in the friar's hand, and all his writings and sermons. Thus della Palla had sought to impress upon Marguerite the obligation of her brother, as the 'minister chosen by God', to be the instrument of the 'liberation' of Florence and the destruction of those who were 'tyrannizing' the city, as prophesied by Savonarola.<sup>160</sup> If della Palla had *piagnone* sympathies however, Brucioli condemned prophesy as inimical to a healthy republic in his *Dialogues* of 1526, and was a virulent opponent of the *piagnoni* during the last republic.<sup>161</sup> The father of Jacopo da Diacceto was a devoted follower of the friar until his death in 1527,<sup>162</sup> but Buondelmonti and Alamanni were certainly not *piagnoni*, and during the last republic were to favour an alliance with the Emperor.<sup>163</sup> The plot was rather the expression of the desire of *ottimati* for an aristocratic regime than of *piagnoni* for a godly republic.

There was more to the plot however, than a wish to implement the long-held desire of leading citizens to establish a regime in which the *ottimati*, rather than the Medici or the *popolo*, were dominant. For in April 1522, in face of the French threat to the city which the plot itself had brought about, Cardinal Giulio had encouraged discussion to 'transform the regime by agreement and not violently', according to Cerretani, knowing that as 'head of the regime' he was 'greatly hated by three

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<sup>159</sup> A. Brucioli, *Dialogi*, ed. A. Landi (Naples, 1982), pp. 110-116.

<sup>160</sup> L. Polizzotto and C. Elam, "'La unione de' gigli con gigli": Two documents on Florence, France and the Savonarolan Millenarian Tradition', *Rinascimento*, Ser. 2, xxxi (1991), p. 256.

<sup>161</sup> Brucioli, *Dialogi*, p. 179.

<sup>162</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 71; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, pp. 131-2.

<sup>163</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 13, 34, 93; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 34; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 239-41.

quarters of the city', who would have wanted the re-establishment of the Great Council and the regime of before 1512. Giulio sought the opinion of individual citizens and five programmes of reform, including that of Alessandro de' Pazzi, were drawn up. According to both Cerretani and Nerli most desired the reopening of the Great Council, the creation of a Senate of 150 citizens for life and a Gonfalonier for one year, that is the aristocratic regime established by the reforms of September 1512, and envisaged by Buondelmonti, who had by then been engaged for some months in conspiring to assassinate the Cardinal and overthrow the regime.<sup>164</sup>

Florentines believed, as Silvano has recently detailed, that the re-opening of the Great Council and the establishment of an aristocratic republic were imminent,<sup>165</sup> and to that end on 11 May Alessandro de' Pazzi addressed an oration to Giulio on behalf of the 'Senate' and 'popolo' of Florence, thanking the Cardinal for restoring liberty to the city.<sup>166</sup> Buondelmonti had been one of those who had put forward a proposal for reform in April,<sup>167</sup> and he too seems to have believed that reform was imminent, but rather than forestalling his designs the prospect of reform merely gave them an added sense of urgency. Thus Buondelmonti despatched Alessandro de' Monaldi to Siena to urge Renzo to hurry to Florence, instructing him, according to Monaldi's confession, to give Renzo news not only of the discontent of the city, the reluctance of the merchants to trade, the 'desperation' of the 'popolo' and the desire for Renzo's arrival, but also of how the Cardinal 'was thinking of a new reform of the regime'.<sup>168</sup> Buondelmonti's instructions illustrate the importance of both foreign support and popular discontent to the plot, and that without either it would not have gone ahead. Yet they also demonstrate that, contrary to modern accounts, the conspiracy was more than just the expression of the conspirators' love of liberty.<sup>169</sup> It also expressed, as we shall see, the desire of Buondelmonti and others involved to

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<sup>164</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 397, 398; Nerli, *Commentari*, pp. 136-7.

<sup>165</sup> Silvano, *Vivere civile*, pp. 128-136, 142.

<sup>166</sup> 'Alessandri Pacci Oratio pro Senatu Populoque Florentino ad Julium Medicem Cardinalem Amplissimum de Republica', ed. Silvano, *Vivere civile*, pp. 182-92; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 137; Pitti, 'Istoria', p. 126.

<sup>167</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 137; Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 114-5.

<sup>168</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, f. 32<sup>v</sup>: 'cogitabat de nova reforma regiminis'.

<sup>169</sup> Hauvette, *Luigi Alamanni*, p. 29; G. Spini, *Tra rinascimento e riforma. Antonio Brucioli* (Florence, 1940), pp. 34-5.

avenge themselves of injuries received from Cardinal Giulio, to exact vengeance from the Cardinal with his assassination.

Buondelmonti, Alamanni, and most of the others involved were former supporters of the Medici, but Cardinal Soderini and the other members of his family who participated, by contrast, had always desired the overthrow of the Medici. Moreover, rather than an aristocratic regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant, they sought the restoration of Piero Soderini as Gonfalonier for life, and would probably have preferred the re-establishment of the popular regime exactly as it had existed before his overthrow, rather than an aristocratic republic such as Buondelmonti planned. The extent of the involvement of the Soderini family in the plot has been questioned by the Cardinal's recent biographer,<sup>170</sup> based on erroneous doubt of Martelli's confession and on Cambi's remark that the Soderini were held to have been condemned not for any participation in the plot, but only on account of their enmity with the Medici.<sup>171</sup> However, as Cerretani and other contemporaries make plain, the Soderini were condemned because the examinations of the other conspirators testified clearly to their involvement in the plot, including that of the ex-Gonfalonier himself.<sup>172</sup> Cardinal Francesco was found to be its 'head'.<sup>173</sup> Niccolò Martelli's confession firmly establishes the crucial role that the Soderini played in the plot, particularly in galvanizing French support. Whilst certainly aiming to give a full account of the extent of French involvement in the plot, Martelli's confession was clearly not intended to exaggerate the role of the Soderini to suit the Medici. For it was made in June 1526,<sup>174</sup> two years after the death of Cardinal Francesco, and nearly three years after the Soderini had been absolved of their condemnation and punishment at Clement's request.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Lowe, *Francesco Soderini*, pp. 127-8.

<sup>171</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 210-11.

<sup>172</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1108, ff. 10<sup>r-v</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 25 June 1522; Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 177<sup>v</sup>; Masi, *Ricordanze*, p. 259; Vettori, 'Sommario', p. 292; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 80.

<sup>173</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 406; *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, II, p. 425: Juan Manuel to the Emperor, 31 May 1522.

<sup>174</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', p. 239.

<sup>175</sup> A.S.F., Balie, 43, f. 207<sup>v</sup> (18 December 1523): Absolution of Tommaso, Giovanbattista and Piero di Paolantonio Soderini, and Tommaso di Giovanvettorino Soderini, and annulment of the confiscation of the goods of Piero di Tommaso Soderini.

While the primary concern of many of those involved in the plot was not to establish an aristocratic regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant, that was the aim, together with the restoration of Piero Soderini as Gonfalonier, behind which the conspirators appear to have united. But in so doing it was an uncommon conspiracy, and the Giachinotti-Pitti plot of 1527, like the plot of 1513, sought the re-establishment of the popular government, and was the work of those who had loyally supported the popular regime until Soderini's overthrow, and had desired its restoration ever since the return of the Medici. As had Niccolò Valori of 1513, so Baldassare Carducci, when also an orator to the Viceroy in August 1512, had fiercely opposed the return of the Medici to Florence as private citizens because, as he advised the *Dieci*, accustomed to dominate the city they would never remain so.<sup>176</sup> Lodovico Nobili emerges from the examination of Pandolfo Biliotti in 1513 to have had a genuine distaste for aspects of Medicean government since its inception. 'Justice is not being done', he complained to Biliotti, recounting how a partisan of the Medici, Cristofano Sernigi, had threatened and robbed a notary with impunity. He also bemoaned the money spent on carnivals declaring that 'one cannot go on bearing these expenses'.<sup>177</sup> All of those involved in the plot were to be enthusiastic supporters of the popular government of the last republic, and apparently opposed to the attempts of Niccolò Capponi to establish an aristocratic regime. Certainly Carducci was to be one of the leaders, with Tommaso Soderini, of the so-called party of the *Popolo*, opposed to that of the *Oligarchia*, during the last republic,<sup>178</sup> and Battista Pitti one of his foremost supporters.<sup>179</sup>

Similarly it was the re-establishment of the popular regime, rather than one in which the *ottimati* were dominant, which was the desire of the young nobles at the forefront of the *Tumulto*, and at their insistence it was the 'popular regime and the Great Council', in the form that it was 'before 1512, at the time of Piero Soderini', according to contemporaries, that the *Signoria* was forced to concede that day.<sup>180</sup>

<sup>176</sup> Guasti, ed., *Sacco di Prato*, ii, pp. 146-7: Baldassare Carducci to the Dieci, 31 August 1512.

<sup>177</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., XCVII, n. 269: Examination of Pandolfo Biliotti.

<sup>178</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 232; Idem, 'Vita', p. 309.

<sup>179</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 17, 153.

<sup>180</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 187<sup>v</sup>; Nardi, 'Lettera', p. 136; Idem, *Istorie*, ii, p. 134.

According to Cambi, one of the cries of those involved was that they did not want to be governed by priests,<sup>181</sup> and the revolt did express hatred, as Foscari described at the time, for Clement's decision in 1524 to send Cardinal Cortona, from a subject town, and the two illegitimate Medici boys, Ippolito and Alessandro, to head the regime in the city, and the increase in Medici control that followed.<sup>182</sup> But for most of those involved, such as Pierfilippo Pandolfini,<sup>183</sup> the 'ignominies' of 'ministers prostituted', 'bastards exalted' and 'peasants honoured' were just part of a catalogue of 'unworthy calamities' and 'infinite evils' that the 'popolo' had suffered since it had been deprived of 'liberty' and entered 'servitude' in 1512.<sup>184</sup> For Pandolfini, as for the other young nobles, it was the desire for the restoration of the popular government, 'the most natural and the best that this city can have' that was the origin of their discontent.<sup>185</sup>

Not all those involved in the *Tumulto* however, wished to re-establish the popular government, a fact ignored in modern accounts.<sup>186</sup> At the head of the revolt there were former supporters of the Medici such as the Salviati, the leaders of the young nobles,<sup>187</sup> as well as Matteo Strozzi, Niccolò Capponi and Francesco Vettori, who had conspired against the Medici prior to the revolt with Filippo Strozzi, another leading member of the regime. They desired not to re-establish the popular government of before 1512, but to establish an aristocratic republic, along the lines perceived in Venice, and shortly before the 23 May 1527 Capponi requested a summary of the Venetian constitution from Donato Giannotti. His famous dialogue on the Venetian republic, completed in November 1526, in which he proposed a Florentine constitution on the Venetian model, was possibly encouraged by Capponi,

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<sup>181</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 306.

<sup>182</sup> Foscari, 'Relazione', pp. 43-4, 73-4.

<sup>183</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 122.

<sup>184</sup> P. Pandolfini, 'Sermone sopra l' elezione del Gonfaloniere di Giustizia', B.N.F., Magl., VIII, 18, ff. 65<sup>r</sup>, 80<sup>v</sup>-81<sup>r</sup>; Idem, 'Oratione di Pier Filippo di Alessandro Pandolfini al Popolo di Firenze nel tempio di San Lorenzo, a di xxviii di gennaio MDXXXVIII', ed. G. Canestrini, *A.S.I.*, Ser. 1, xv (1851), p. 375.

<sup>185</sup> Pandolfini, 'Sermone', ff. 65<sup>v</sup>, 66<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>186</sup> Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 24-8.

<sup>187</sup> On the roles of Piero and Averardo Salviati in the revolt see B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 143: Pagolo Benivieni to Bernardo Segni, 2 May 1527; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, col. 28; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 105, 117; Segni, 'Vita', p. 301.



and was dedicated to Francesco Nasi,<sup>188</sup> one of those who distinguished themselves during the revolt.<sup>189</sup>

Vettori and Capponi were to be closely involved in the unsuccessful efforts of leading citizens to establish an aristocratic regime with the provisions of 16 May, when the Medici peacefully departed from the city after the sack of Rome,<sup>190</sup> and Capponi was to continue to pursue his desire for a regime in which the *ottimati* rather than the Medici or the *popolo* were dominant when Gonfalonier of the last republic.<sup>191</sup> Most of the young nobles at the forefront of the *Tumulto* were to oppose those attempts, as Pandolfini did in his *Sermone* of 1528 against Capponi, where a 'stato degli ottimati' is called a 'tyranny', for 'liberty is none other than the equality of citizens'.<sup>192</sup> Yet Piero and Averardo Salviati were to share Capponi's desire as Gonfalonier to establish a 'stato di pochi'.<sup>193</sup>

The principal reason, as we have seen, for which Capponi and other former supporters of the Medici conspired against them was their desire to secure the city and themselves from imperialist threat, rather than any desire to establish an aristocratic republic. Capponi may have been 'always opposed to the Medici house', as he was described in May 1527.<sup>194</sup> Capponi, Vettori and the others may have always naturally preferred a regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant, that had not prevented both Vettori and Filippo Strozzi from supporting the potential despotism of Lorenzo before his death in 1519.<sup>195</sup> Where Capponi and Matteo Strozzi were two leaders of the regime who had favoured the proposals for reform in 1522, both Vettori and Filippo Strozzi had been foremost amongst the *palleschi* in the regime who had opposed reform, complaining to the Cardinal, according to Cerretani, that he

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<sup>188</sup> R. Starn, *Donato Giannotti and his Epistolae* (Geneva, 1968), pp. 19-22.

<sup>189</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 122.

<sup>190</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 8, 55; Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 45-7, 349-51; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 196, 198-9.

<sup>191</sup> Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 93-4; Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 243-5.

<sup>192</sup> Pandolfini, 'Sermone', ff. 71<sup>v</sup>, 77<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>193</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 104.

<sup>194</sup> A.S.Mo., Canc. Duc., Firenze, 13 (unfoliated): Pierantonio Torello to the Duke, 31 May 1527.

<sup>195</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 358; F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, iii, ed. R. Palmarocchi (Florence, 1943), p. 51; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 112, 138-42, 295.

wanted to 'abandon' them, and that the reform was a 'trick' that would 'ruin' both the Cardinal and themselves.<sup>196</sup>

Yet the imperialist threat did serve to expose an underlying discontent of the conspirators with Medici rule, a discontent that serves to explain why it was they, rather than other supporters of the Medici, who conspired against them. For it was their opposition to the rule of Cortona and the increase in Medici power following Cardinal Giulio's elevation to the Papacy in 1523 that ensured their desertion of the regime as soon as Clement's foreign policy was seen to fail. Vettori and Lorenzo Strozzi had both advised Clement against sending Cortona and the two young Medici to Florence,<sup>197</sup> arguing, as Vettori himself later recalled, that since Cortona was from a subject territory he did not have the 'affection of the city', and that it was neither 'useful nor honourable' to appoint a 'vassal' of the Florentines to the government.<sup>198</sup> Niccolò Capponi was one of those 'grandi', according to Segni, displeased with Cortona's appointment and preferring the restoration of 'civil government'.<sup>199</sup>

Segni's suggestion that both Capponi and Matteo Strozzi withdrew from the regime in disgust at Cortona's appointment is not substantiated by their record in office, and Strozzi remained, as Vettori did, a leading member of the government.<sup>200</sup> Yet following Cortona's arrival there was a division within the regime, according to Varchi and Nerli, between supporters of a narrower or a broader government, and all those who were to plot in 1526/7 and head the *Tumulto* can be found amongst the latter. According to Varchi, Filippo and Matteo Strozzi, Niccolò Capponi and both Piero and Averardo Salviati were foremost amongst those supporters of the Medici who were opposed to any further restriction of the regime. They favoured the Medici as 'leaders and superiors' (*capi e superiori*) but not as 'princes and bosses' (*principi e padroni*).<sup>201</sup> Nerli includes Francesco Vettori in the group, which he says favoured a broadening of the regime. They were not yet contemplating the overthrow of the

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<sup>196</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 398-9, 401.

<sup>197</sup> F. Zeffi, 'Vita di Lorenzo Strozzi', in L. Strozzi, *Vite degli uomini illustri della casa Strozzi* (Florence, 1892), p. xx; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 64-5.

<sup>198</sup> Vettori, 'Sommaro', pp. 349-50; 'Raccolto delle azioni', pp. 276-7.

<sup>199</sup> Segni, 'Vita', p. 294.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 295. For their record in office see Appendix A, viii.

<sup>201</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 67.

Medici but Capponi was already showing himself to be much in favour of the 'universale' according to Nerli, and acquiring much popular goodwill, so that those who desired political change and a 'more free means of government' believed they could count on the support of Capponi and the others when an 'occasion' arose 'to be able to alter the government'.<sup>202</sup>

However, it was only in the face of the imperialist threat to the city that these divisions were to split the regime apart. Capponi, Vettori and the Strozzi were then not only to conspire against the Medici, but it was also with their encouragement and protection, as we shall see, that the young nobles led by the Salviati were to clamour their way towards revolt. Yet the *Tumulto* itself was the overwhelming expression of the long-held desire of the young nobles and others for the restoration of the popular government overthrown in 1512. And while fomented by resentment with Cortona, the financial burden imposed by the Medici and fear of the sack, the origin of the revolt lay not in the events of 1524 or 1527 but rather in the events of 1512.

Grand claims have recently been made for the prominent role of Savonarolans both in the revolt itself and in opposing the Medici in the months preceding it, based on the *piagnone* sympathies of two of the seven condemned for their involvement in the revolt, and on the strong influence of Savonarolans during the last republic.<sup>203</sup> Ser Giuliano da Ripa, brought in to act as notary to the proceedings when no one else could be found to do so, and one of those condemned, had certainly been a devoted supporter of Savonarola since 1494,<sup>204</sup> a follower of Pietro Bernardino, and is recorded in November 1512 to have been the only *piagnone* not to have disowned the friar.<sup>205</sup> He declared the exile of the Medici to be a 'holy provision', and thereby gave the event a Savonarolan flavour, but it was not their victory.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 143.

<sup>203</sup> Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, pp. 335-6.

<sup>204</sup> 'Processo di Fra Domenico', ed. Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, p. cciii; Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, pp. 125, 128. Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, f. 93<sup>v</sup>, records that da Ripa had been in trouble with the Bishop of Florence in December 1505 as the leader of those of a 'sect' who made orations at the Chapel of San Zanobi in the Duomo. He was made to promise not to observe such 'superstition'.

<sup>205</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 34<sup>v</sup>: Pandolfo de' Conti to Francesco Guicciardini, 13 November 1512.

<sup>206</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 108.

Varchi describes that there were those in the Palace who recalled Savonarola's prophesy that God would free the city from servitude,<sup>207</sup> and amongst these may have been Girolamo Buonagrazia and Francesco Tosinghi, who had both signed the petition in favour of Savonarola in 1497.<sup>208</sup> Yet Varchi's is the only account of the revolt to make any mention of Savonarolan influence, and Matteo Strozzi was the only leading citizen involved who had supported Savonarola in his lifetime.<sup>209</sup> For every Buonagrazia involved there were those, such as Giovanni Alberti,<sup>210</sup> or Antonio Alamanni, who had both been vigorously opposed to Savonarola, and at the forefront of the assault on San Marco and the friar's downfall in 1498.<sup>211</sup> More striking than the meagre evidence of Savonarolan influence is that many of the young nobles who distinguished themselves in the revolt, such as Jacopo Alamanni and Pierfilippo Pandolfini,<sup>212</sup> and who had been at the forefront of the demand for arms in the preceding months, such as Castiglione, Machiavelli and del Bene, were to be leaders of the young *arrabbiati* in the last republic.<sup>213</sup> Battista Pitti, whose father had been an opponent of Savonarola,<sup>214</sup> Carducci and the other members of the plot of February 1527 were also to be leading *arrabbiati*. *Piagnoni* were involved in the *Tumulto*, but the leaders of the revolt, and of the plots that preceded it, were opponents of the Medici whose desire for popular government or an aristocratic republic was guided by the traditional values of Florentine republicanism rather than by any Savonarolan sentiment.

That had been the case with the plots of 1513 and 1522 and would also appear to have been the case with the vast majority of those condemned for speaking out against the Medici regime.<sup>215</sup> In as much as such detraction of the regime could be said to have expressed anything more than opposition to the Medici, most of those

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<sup>207</sup> Ibid., p. 109.

<sup>208</sup> Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, pp. 448, 459.

<sup>209</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 445; 'Processo di Fra Domenico', ed. Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, p. cciv.

<sup>210</sup> L. Passerini, *Gli Alberti di Firenze. Genealogia storia e documenti*, i (Florence, 1869), pp. 214-5.

<sup>211</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 261.

<sup>212</sup> On Alamanni's role in the revolt see L. Guicciardini, 'Sacco', p. 141; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 133; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 149; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 75; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 107.

<sup>213</sup> Segni, 'Vita', p. 323; Idem, *Storie*, i, p. 64.

<sup>214</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 443.

<sup>215</sup> Those condemned are listed in Appendix A xii. Their cases are discussed in detail in Chapters Three and Four.

condemned, with the possible exception of Andrea Rinuccini,<sup>216</sup> would appear to have desired the restoration of popular government rather than the establishment of an aristocratic regime, and both Jacopo Altoviti and Martino Scarfi for example, were certainly to support the popular party in the last republic.<sup>217</sup>

A few *piagnoni* such as Bartolomeo Redditi in 1513 and Fra Spirito in 1521 can be found amongst those condemned.<sup>218</sup> To them one might add Francesco del Pugliese and Bartolomeo Pandolfini, who with Redditi had both been close friends and supporters of Savonarola,<sup>219</sup> and Francesco Torrigiani, who is recorded with the three others to have signed the petition in support of Savonarola in 1497.<sup>220</sup> Yet there were also those such as Duccio Adimari and Piero Orlandini who had been opponents of Savonarola, and were both amongst those condemned with Agostino Capponi and Doffo Spini, the head of the *Compagnacci*, for gambling in 1495.<sup>221</sup> Adimari had been one of the *Compagnacci* who attacked San Marco in 1498,<sup>222</sup> and Orlandini is recorded to have abused Savonarola as he was paraded through the city to his execution, and to have told the friar that he was going where he deserved.<sup>223</sup> In the vast majority of cases there is no evidence that the opposition to the Medici of those condemned was based on, or accompanied by, support for Savonarola. If we are to assume that Martino Scarfi was a *piagnone*, as Polizzotto does, solely on the grounds that his father had been a supporter of Savonarola,<sup>224</sup> then we must also note that the fathers of both Camillo Antinori,<sup>225</sup> and Giusto della Badessa had been amongst the foremost opponents of the friar.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 151-2.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 57, 153.

<sup>218</sup> B. Redditi, 'Breve compendio e sommario della verita predicata e profetata dal R. P. fra Girolamo Savonarola', ed. J. Schnitzer, *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte Savonarolas*, i (Munich, 1902). This was composed about 1500.

<sup>219</sup> Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, pp. ccxxviii, ccxxxii, cclxi, cclxx and *passim*; Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 275; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 441.

<sup>220</sup> Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, pp. 456-9.

<sup>221</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 102, f. 321<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>222</sup> Ser Lorenzo Violi, 'Apologia', in Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, p. lxxxii.

<sup>223</sup> B.N.F., F.P., II, I, 138, f. 84<sup>v</sup>: 'Libro di varie notizie e memorie della venerabile compagnia Santa Maria della Croce al Tempio'.

<sup>224</sup> Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, pp. 259-60; *Idem*, 'Medici', p. 144.

<sup>225</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 443.

<sup>226</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, i, col. 121, records that Piero della Badessa was one of those deprived of office in 1496 for his part in the anti-savonarolan *intelligenza* uncovered that year. See Rubinstein, 'Politics', pp. 174-5.

However, whatever the Savonarolan inspiration behind open and public detraction of the Medicean regime may have been, the plots make clear that the focus and leadership of opposition to the Medici was provided by supporters of popular government or an aristocratic republic guided by traditional Florentine republicanism and not by followers of Savonarola who desired to establish a godly republic. Boscoli and others who conspired against the Medici sought inspiration and justification not from Savonarola, as we shall see, but from classical sources, from Aristotle, Livy, and the praise of Brutus in Roman literature.

Plots against the Medici were always encouraged by support for the past regime, the popular desire for the reopening of the Great Council, and would not have occurred without it. Plots thus testify to the extent to which the creation of the Great Council and its abolition left the Medici weaker on their return in 1512 than they had been in the fifteenth century. By contrast the most important internal weakness of the popular government was the discontent of *ottimati* on account of their desire for a dominant role in the regime. The plot to overthrow Soderini which brought the Medici back to the city in 1512 was the expression of that discontent, it was encouraged by that discontent amongst the wider group of leading citizens, and that wider discontent contributed at least in part to its success.

Despite these differences however, what characterized conspiracy against both the Medici and popular government regimes was less an attempt to establish an aristocratic government than to restore the old regime. Most plots were the work of those who did not share the same aims, or shared them for different reasons. It was above all opposition to the regime, rather than any shared desire for what was to replace it, that bound conspiracies together. Success, when it came with the overthrow of Soderini in 1512, revealed just how divergent the aims of those involved really were. Nevertheless it is clear that most plots sought the re-establishment of the past regime and were the work of those who had always desired its restoration. Plots thus demonstrate the extent to which the instability of Florentine politics in the early-sixteenth century was less the result of the failure of regimes to satisfy the desires of *ottimati* for a dominant role in the regime, than of their failure to extinguish support for the past regime.

## Part Two

### Attitudes to Opposition

## The Condemnation of Political Crime

Despite the interest shown in recent years in the history of crime and criminal justice in Renaissance Florence,<sup>1</sup> the condemnation and punishment of political crime remains amongst the least explored aspects of Florentine political history.<sup>2</sup> Historians of Florentine political life in the sixteenth century have referred on only a few occasions to condemnations of individuals for 'political' crimes, and for crimes of speaking against the 'state' or the 'regime', and they have never sought to explain what was and what was not considered by Florentines to be a crime against the 'state' or the 'regime' and the reasons for it.<sup>3</sup> Historians of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries have for long produced figures on the number of condemnations for 'political crime' or 'crimes against the state' in short periods, usually of only two or three years.<sup>4</sup> Rarely however, have they made any attempt to explain what they

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<sup>1</sup> See for example A. Zorzi, ed., 'Istituzioni giudiziarie e aspetti della criminalità nella Firenze tardomedievale', *Ricerche Storiche*, xviii (1988), pp. 447-637; M. Rocke, 'Il controllo dell'omosessualità a Firenze nel XV secolo: gli "Ufficiali di Notte"', *Quaderni Storici*, lxvi (1987), pp. 701-23; A. Zorzi, 'I fiorentini e gli uffici pubblici nel primo Quattrocento: concorrenza, abusi, illegalità', *Quaderni Storici*, lxvi (1987) pp. 725-52; M. S. Mazzi, 'Cronache di periferia dello stato fiorentino: reati contro la morale nel primo Quattrocento', *Studi Storici*, New Ser., xxvii (1986), pp. 609-637.

<sup>2</sup> Some aspects have been briefly discussed by G. Pinto, 'Controllo politico e ordine pubblico nei primi vicariati fiorentini: gli 'atti' criminali degli ufficiali forensi', *Quaderni Storici*, xlix (1982), pp. 226-41. There have been valuable examinations of the punishment of exile in R. Starn, *Contrary Commonwealth. The Theme of Exile in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Berkeley, 1982), and of *pitture infamanti* in S. Edgerton Jr., *Pictures and Punishment. Art and Criminal Prosecution during the Florentine Renaissance* (Ithaca, 1985). Of less value is M. Wolfgang, 'Political Crimes and Punishments in Renaissance Florence', *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science*, xlv (1953-4), pp. 555-81.

<sup>3</sup> Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 67, 99, 135; Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 119, 221, 238, 249; Butters, *Governors*, p. 287; Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, pp. 263, 357.

<sup>4</sup> U. Dorini, *Il diritto penale e la delinquenza in Firenze nel secolo XIV* (Lucca, 1923), p. 129, of the years 1352-5 and 1380-3; A. Zorzi, 'Aspetti e problemi dell' amministrazione della giustizia penale nella repubblica fiorentina', *A.S.I.*, cxlv (1987), pp. 428, 443, 535 (1400-1, 1433-5 and 1476-8); Cohn, *Labouring Classes*, pp. 184 n. 12, 275-80 and Idem, 'Criminality and the State in Renaissance



understand by 'political crime', or what criteria they have used to distinguish 'political' from other crimes. Nor has any attempt been made to pursue contemporary Florentine definitions of political crime. The questions of what Florentines deemed to be a political offence and whether that changed from one regime to another have yet to be answered.

Thanks to the surviving records of the magistracies responsible for criminal justice in Florence it is possible to trace the condemnation of political crime throughout the period, across both Medicean and popular governments. What is most striking is that the same idea of political crime was shared by all regimes. Both popular governments and the Medici regime shared the same understanding, for example, of what it was to speak against the regime, rather than against leading citizens, particular policies or individual magistracies and magistrates. Where they differed was in the extent to which the regime itself could agree on whether particular cases of outspokenness and other acts were crimes against it, or indeed crimes at all. Popular governments were divided to an extent that the Medici regime never was, and each side accused the other of crimes against the popular regime and the public welfare, and defended itself from the same accusation.

Disagreements concerning what constituted a crime against the public welfare often centred on disagreements on what constituted the public welfare itself. What emerges most clearly from an investigation of the condemnation of political crime is the uncertainty with which every regime in Florence identified itself. That uncertainty however, was particularly marked in popular governments. It was never as clear as it was under the Medici in whose interests popular government was to rule, where the public welfare of the city lay, and who were its guardians. That is one reason why, as we shall see, there were twice as many individuals condemned for speaking against the regime in the first two years of the Medicean regime after 1512 than in the thirteen years of both popular governments.<sup>5</sup>

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Florence, 1344-1466', *Journal of Social History*, xiv (1980), pp. 211-34 (1344-5, 1374-5, 1455-6); L. Stern, *The Criminal Law System of Medieval and Renaissance Florence* (London, 1994), pp. 214, 219 (1425-8).

<sup>5</sup> See Chapter Four, Table One.

To describe plots and other attacks against the regime Florentines in our period occasionally referred, as they had in the fifteenth century, to the Roman notion of crimes of *laesa maiestatis*, concerning acts that diminished the greatness or security of the sovereign power. As the *Signoria* and the Council of Seventy had declared in 1481 that three men who had conspired to ‘take away liberty and overthrow this regime’ had committed ‘*crimen lesae maiestatis*’,<sup>6</sup> so the *Otto di Guardia* could condemn Piero Soderini in 1522 for conspiring to overthrow the regime and having thus committed ‘*crimen lese maiestatis*’.<sup>7</sup> Yet courts and legislators almost never delineated when a crime was of *laesa maiestas*, concerning themselves rather with whether a crime was ‘*caso di stato*’ or ‘*casus status*’.

*Stato* most commonly referred to the dominant regime, those in control of the power structure of the state. It also, and more traditionally, referred to the constitution or power structure itself. However, in ‘*caso di stato*’ or ‘*casus status*’, *status* means the public welfare, or the prosperous condition of the *civitas* or *populus*, a concept which had descended through the medieval glossators from the *status rei Romanae* of the *Digest*.<sup>8</sup> As such it is distinct from *maiestas*, derived from the comparative *maior* (greater), concerned with the sovereignty and *superioritas* of its bearer, possessed by the *populus romanus* in republican Rome, the *princeps* in imperial Rome.<sup>9</sup> Both could embrace the security of the territory of the *res publica* and the integrity of its constitution which is why they could be equated.

Since the late thirteenth century laws and edicts in Florence had concerned themselves with the maintenance and conservation of the ‘*bonus et pacificus status*’, the ‘good and peaceful condition’, of the city, and the punishment of those who

<sup>6</sup> A. Capelli, ed., ‘Lettere e notizie del Magnifico Lorenzo de’ Medici’ in *Atti e memorie delle R. R. Deputazione di storia patria per le provincie modenese e parmenese*, i (1863), p. 255: Antonio da Montecatini to Duke Ercole d’ Este, 9 June 1481, ‘torre la libertà e mutare questo stato’.

<sup>7</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, ff. 54<sup>r</sup>, 58<sup>r-v</sup>: ‘tractasse et fecisse tractatum ... contra pacificum statum civitatis Florentie ... et commisse crimen lese maiestatis’.

<sup>8</sup> N. Rubinstein, ‘Notes on the word “stato” in Florence before Machiavelli’, *Florilegium Historiale. Essays presented to Wallace K. Ferguson*, ed. J. Rowe and W. Stockdale (Toronto, 1971), pp. 314-8; G. Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought: Public Law and the State 1100-1322* (Princeton, 1964), pp. 269, 336, 340.

<sup>9</sup> R. Bauman, *The ‘Crimen Maiestatis’ in the Roman Republic and Augustan Principate* (Johannesburg, 1967), pp. 1-12.

violated it or threatened to do so.<sup>10</sup> In 1378 a special magistracy, the *Otto di Guardia*, was established to investigate crimes ‘against the *status* in the city and outside it’.<sup>11</sup> Exactly what was to be considered against the *status* seems to have been left to the magistracy itself. By 1478 the *Otto* were able not only to investigate but also, when awarded powers of *balìa*, to judge and condemn whoever committed or attempted to commit a crime against the ‘*stato*’, condition, of the city ‘or its good government or in dishonour or contempt of it’. Again what acts were to be condemned on these grounds seems to have been left to the *Otto* and by the law of 1478 the *Otto* was authorized to act without reference to statutory law.<sup>12</sup> During the last republic crimes recognized and investigated by the *Otto* as ‘*casi di stato*’ had to be accepted as such and judged in the court of the *Quarantia*.<sup>13</sup> A new court was established in April 1528 to judge ‘*casi repentini di stato*’, those that needed urgent resolution, and where the death penalty was to be imposed.<sup>14</sup> Neither provision elucidated in any way what was a ‘*caso di stato*’.

That magistrates were never obliged to define clearly what constituted a *casus status* was deliberate, to enable the regime to prosecute more easily those acts of political opposition or disloyalty which it saw fit. Where there appeared an element of ‘public interest’, Lorenzo Strozzi wrote, magistrates judged ‘more according to the free will of their minds than according to the written words of the laws’.<sup>15</sup> For the *Otto* and the *Quarantia* were not, as Florentine criminal courts once had been, presided over by a supposedly impartial professional foreign rector, working independently of the political executive, the *Signoria*.<sup>16</sup> Indeed the *Otto* was part of the political executive, in charge of maintaining public order, for which it was able to issue proclamations (*bandi*) concerning the meeting of confraternities, the carrying of arms and so on. The *Otto* was designed, according to Guicciardini, so that the regime would have ‘a club’ to ‘beat the heads’ of those who wanted to slander or alter the

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<sup>10</sup> Dorini, *Diritto*, p. 129; W. Bowsky, ‘Anatomy of Rebellion’, p. 230.

<sup>11</sup> A. Antonelli, ‘La magistratura degli Otto di Guardia a Firenze’, *A.S.I.*, cxii (1954), p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>13</sup> A.S.F., Provvisioni, Registri, 206, f. 10<sup>v</sup> (June 1527).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 207, ff. 10<sup>v</sup>-12<sup>f</sup>; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 295.

<sup>15</sup> Strozzi, ‘Vita’, p. xiv.

<sup>16</sup> Zorzi, ‘Aspetti’, pp. 391-453; Stern, *Criminal Law*, pp. xx, 13-14, 171-5, 221, and *passim*.

government.<sup>17</sup> The importance of the *Otto*, particularly to the internal security of the regime, was such that following the overthrow of regimes in 1494, 1512 and 1527 its members were replaced, new ones being appointed by the *Signoria*.<sup>18</sup>

Although the *Quarantia* was just a court its personnel, like that of the *Otto*, was selected from members of the regime, in the form of the Council of Eighty. They were citizens qualified to hold political office and who would in the future or had in the past occupied seats in the executive. Furthermore, during the last republic some twenty additional members, from each of the executive magistracies also sat in the *Quarantia*.<sup>19</sup> The emergency court was made exclusively of the executive magistracies, the *Signoria*, the *Dieci di Balìa* and the *Otto*.<sup>20</sup> When they did not form part of the actual body of a magistracy or court itself, holders of political power could still affect their decisions. The *Signoria* could specify the outcome or penalty to be imposed in cases before the *Otto* through the use of *bulletini*.<sup>21</sup> It could do so having deliberated the case amongst itself or, as with the sentence of execution of the five leaders of the conspiracy of 1497, having sought the counsel of other magistracies and citizens in a *pratica*.<sup>22</sup> The Gonfalonier had *de iure* ability to intervene in judicial decisions of every magistrate with his own opinion and influence.<sup>23</sup> The Medici had such ability *de facto* through the same unofficial channels of influence that they exercised over all magistracies. So the decision to condemn a crime as a *casus status* and even to condemn it at all, was always a political one.

The Statutes of 1415 had laid down the penalties for those who knew of but did not reveal any 'agreement, sedition and or conspiracy' against the 'peaceful, free, tranquil and guelf condition (*status*) of the city of Florence' that intended to 'subvert

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<sup>17</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 41.

<sup>18</sup> A.S.F., *Tratte*, 905, f. 4<sup>v</sup>; *Ibid.*, 906, ff. 85<sup>r</sup>, 89<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 143; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 188.

<sup>20</sup> A.S.F., *Sig. e Coll.*, *Delib.*, o.a., 133, f. 74<sup>v</sup>: A case of July 1530; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 295.

<sup>21</sup> Stern, *Criminal Law*, pp. 176-7.

<sup>22</sup> A.S.F., *Sig. e Coll.*, *Delib.*, o.a., 99, f. 72<sup>r</sup> (17 August 1497); Cei, 'Storia', ff. 52<sup>r</sup>-3<sup>r</sup>; Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, pp. 207-8; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 140-1; Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 237.

<sup>23</sup> Zorzi, 'Aspetti', p. 565.

and overthrow that condition (*status*),<sup>24</sup> and for those who made and participated in any ‘gathering or congregation of persons, conventicle, or conspiracy’ to ‘violate or subvert’ the ‘peaceful condition’ (*pacificus status*) of the Florentine Commune and *popolo* or ‘against its liberty’.<sup>25</sup> It was for this crime that those who conspired against the regime in 1497,<sup>26</sup> 1510,<sup>27</sup> 1513,<sup>28</sup> and 1522,<sup>29</sup> were condemned and it was the crime of having conspired ‘to subvert and overthrow the present peaceful condition (*status*)’ that was described by the *Otto* in 1522 as ‘crimen lese maiestatis’.<sup>30</sup> All the condemnations make it clear that a conspiracy, a ‘tractatus’ or ‘coniuratio’ had been made, and that not only was the crime against the *status* but that it aimed to overturn (*subvertere*) it and overthrow (*mutare*) it. This is an important phrase because it distinguishes attempts to overthrow the regime from other crimes against the *status*.

It is important to note that conspiracy to overthrow the regime was condemned as a crime against the ‘prosperous condition’, *status* of the city. It is true that Florentines since the early fourteenth century had referred to constitutional change as ‘mutazione di stato’.<sup>31</sup> It is also true that ‘mutazione di stato’ was how

<sup>24</sup> *Statuta Populi et Communis Florentiae* (Fribergi [Florence], 1778-83), i, p. 278: ‘tractatum, seditionem, et seu coniurationem, qui nel quae fieret contra statum pacificum liberum, tranquillum et guelfum civitatis Florentiae, et pro subversione et mutatione ipsius status’.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 278-9: ‘invitatem, seu congregationem gentium, conventiculam, conspiracyonem, vel posturam pro violatione, vel subversione pacifici status populi et communis Florentiae, vel ordinamentorum iustitiae dicitur populi, vel contra libertatem ipsius’.

<sup>26</sup> The condemnations of most of those involved are not extant but that of Francesco Cegia and Luca Speranzini survives. A.S.F., O.G., 108, f. 130<sup>v</sup> (November 1497): ‘tractaverunt ... in subversionem et violationem presentis pacifici et tranquilli status populi et communis Florentie et seu contra libertatem ipsius ... tractatum et seditionem .. contra pacificum statum predicti, et pro mutatione et subversione pacifici status predicti’.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 148, ff. 266<sup>v</sup>-7<sup>r</sup> (December 1510): Condemnation of Prinzivalle della Stufa for having with others ‘tractaverunt eorum mala et perversa opera’ to kill the Gonfalonier ‘in subversionem et violationem presentis pacifici status populi et communis Florentie, occupationem et invasionem palatii populi Florentini et contra libertatem ipsius’.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 155, ff. 36<sup>r</sup><sup>v</sup> (February 1513): Condemnation of Pietropaolo Boscoli and Agostino Capponi for having made ‘tractatum, seditionem et coniurationem contra presentem pacificum liberum et tranquillum statum civitatis Florentie et pro subversione et mutatione ipsius status’.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 182, ff. 30<sup>r</sup><sup>v</sup>, 39<sup>r</sup><sup>v</sup>, 59<sup>r</sup><sup>v</sup> (June and July 1522): Condemnations for ‘tractatum, seditionem et coniurationem contra presentem pacificum statum liberum tranquillum et guelfum civitatis Florentie, et pro subversione et mutatione presentis pacifici status civitatis Florentie’. The condemnations of those involved have been published in C. Guasti, ed., ‘Documenti della congiura fatto contro il cardinale Giulio de’ Medici nel 1522’, *Giornale Storico degli Archivi Toscani*, iii (1859), pp. 121-42.

<sup>30</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, f. 53<sup>v</sup>: ‘tractatum fecisse, illumque scivisse et non revelasse et in effectu durante eius vita commisse crimen lese maiestatis et tractasse subvertere ac mutare presentem pacificum statum’.

<sup>31</sup> Rubinstein, ‘Notes’, p. 316.

Florentines described the overthrow of the dominant regime, and the constitutional structures that maintained it, in both August and September 1512,<sup>32</sup> and in May 1527,<sup>33</sup> and that 'mutare lo stato' was how magistracies described the aims of these conspiracies in their correspondence.<sup>34</sup> But that is not what is meant in these condemnations, and as we shall see presently not all crimes against the *status* were understood to be an act against the regime.

In condemning conspiracy against the regime as a crime against the *status* Florentines followed Roman practice closely. No open act was needed, for it was enough to have intended and consented to overthrow the regime. Trial of the accused could take place even after death, as of Piero Soderini in 1522, since although 'being dead he cannot be damned, his memory can be damned, and his goods and privileges confiscated'.<sup>35</sup> Failure to reveal plots was treated as complicity, and it was enough just to have known and not revealed that others had conspired to be condemned.<sup>36</sup> It was on these grounds that Bernardo del Nero in 1497,<sup>37</sup> Niccolò Valori and Giovanni Folchi in 1513,<sup>38</sup> and Alessandro Monaldi in 1522,<sup>39</sup> were condemned. As Antonio Strozzi argued in a *pratica* in 1497, the crime might have arrived in them 'through a still, as a trickle', but it was still 'crimen lese maiestatis'.<sup>40</sup>

Yet there were occasions when that point was not so clear. In 1510 for example, Luigi della Stufa, father of the main protagonist of the conspiracy, first

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<sup>32</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 28<sup>r</sup>: Jacopo Guicciardini to Francesco Guicciardini, 3 September 1512; Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 83<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>33</sup> A.S.F., Otto di Pratica, Missive, 18, ff. 161<sup>v</sup>-2<sup>r</sup>: Letters of 17 May 1527; Rubinstein, 'Notes', p. 320.

<sup>34</sup> A.S.F., Sig., Minutari, 21, f. 39<sup>r</sup>: Otto di Pratica to the Lucchese, 1 June 1522; A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 36, ff. 9<sup>r</sup>, 11<sup>r-v</sup>, 12<sup>r-v</sup>: Letters of 23 December 1510; *Ibid.*, 39, ff. 161<sup>r-v</sup>: Letters of 19 February 1513. On 1497 see Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 206; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 132.

<sup>35</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, ff. 53<sup>v</sup>-4<sup>v</sup>, 58<sup>v</sup>: 'mortuus non possit damnari; tamen potest eius memoria damnari, et bona et iura eius confiscari'.

<sup>36</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 108, ff. 130<sup>v</sup>-131<sup>r</sup>, describes the crime as 'in turbationem et grave damnum dicte libertatis et pacifici status'.

<sup>37</sup> His condemnation is not extant but see Cei, 'Storia', f. 52<sup>v</sup>; Parenti, 'Storia' ed. Schnitzer, p. 212; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 140.

<sup>38</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 155, f. 37<sup>r</sup>: Condemnation of Valori for 'habuit intra colloquia cum dicto Pietro Paulo circa delicta predictae tam audiendo quam respondendo'; N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 18<sup>r</sup>; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xvi, col. 25: Giuliano de' Medici to Piero da Bibbiena, 7 March 1513; Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 75; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 27.

<sup>39</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, ff. 32<sup>r</sup>-3<sup>r</sup>. Monaldi was exiled to Naples for ten years.

<sup>40</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 10<sup>r</sup>; Cei, 'Storia', ff. 52<sup>r-v</sup>: 'per lambicco, e distillatamente'.

denied knowing anything of the plot. He was then found to have been informed by his son of the plot on the morning of his flight from the city and to have given him some money. Luigi confessed to this, claiming that he had not informed the authorities because they already knew.<sup>41</sup> Some, including the Gonfalonier, thought that the matter should be treated as a 'cosa di stato' and he summoned the Council of Eighty to deliberate the case. Soderini wanted Luigi examined further with torture, to see who else was involved, and punished severely. Some of those supporting the Gonfalonier wanted Luigi executed. Others argued that Luigi should be released since his only crime was a 'venial lie' - not to have confessed to know of a plot when the *Signoria* already knew of it and its protagonist had already left the city.<sup>42</sup> The Eighty did decide to have the case sent to the *Otto* as a 'cosa di stato', where the 'republic' had been in danger of the 'overthrow of its condition, of deaths and of burnings'.<sup>43</sup> Yet the *Otto* did not examine Luigi further, and although he was exiled to Empoli for five years,<sup>44</sup> he was punished, the *Dieci* explained, less because he had confessed to have known 'not the fact, but the reason for his son's departure',<sup>45</sup> than for having been obstinate to do so, having first lied to his examiners.<sup>46</sup>

There were no condemnations for conspiracy during the last republic, but there were condemnations of attempts to rouse the *popolo* to arms. This was traditionally done, as it was during the *Tumulto del Venerdì* in 1527, with the exclamation of slogans such as 'popolo, popolo e libertà', and thus the cry of 'popolo' in Florence was seen as none other than 'a rousing of the *popolo* and the overthrow of the regime' and was prohibited by statute.<sup>47</sup> Jacopo Alamanni's cry of 'popolo, popolo' and 'guardia, guardia' in November 1528, in an attempt to 'rouse the *popolo*' and the Palace guard was certainly seen in this way.<sup>48</sup> Alamanni's crime

<sup>41</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 231-2; Idem, *Storia*, pp. 399-400; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 104.

<sup>42</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 45<sup>r</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 232-4; Idem, *Storia*, pp. 400-02; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, pp. 245-7.

<sup>43</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 232; Idem, *Storia*, p. 400: 'dove fussi venuto a la republicha pericholo di mutatione di stato, di morte et d' incendii'. Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 246.

<sup>44</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 148, f. 272<sup>r</sup>: 'Condemnation by the *Otto* 'iustis de causis ut dixerunt moti'.

<sup>45</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balia, Missive, 36, ff. 20<sup>v</sup>-21<sup>r</sup>: Dieci to Roberto Acciaiuoli, 1 January 1511.

<sup>46</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 235; Idem, *Storia*, p. 403.

<sup>47</sup> *Statuta*, i, p. 286; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 81.

<sup>48</sup> B.N.F., F.P., II III 433, f. 80<sup>r</sup>: 'Raguaglio del caso di Jacopo Alamanni per Lionardo Ginori'; Anon., 'Diario, 1521-1536', f. 22<sup>v</sup>; Anon., 'Cronica', f. 167<sup>v</sup>; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlix, coll. 144-5, 152-3:

was thus judged to be ‘against the regime’, and indeed deserving of immediate capital punishment because he ‘has roused the *popolo*’.<sup>49</sup> His action had resulted in a ‘little tumult though without scandal’ because the Palace and the Piazza were full of citizens following a meeting of the Great Council, which seems to have referred to no more than a general state of excitement and alarm rather than a riot.<sup>50</sup> Shops were closed and the Palace was locked.<sup>51</sup> Since he had been the ‘cause’ of a ‘tumult’ in the Piazza the case was condemned as a ‘caso repentino di stato’ and Alamanni was sentenced to death by the emergency court of the executive magistracies.<sup>52</sup>

Alamanni seems to have been thought by some to have been attempting to overthrow the regime.<sup>53</sup> However, he was condemned simply for crying *popolo* and calling the guard ‘to his aid’ whilst being led to prison following his assault on one Lionardo Ginori.<sup>54</sup> Thus whatever intentions were perceived to lie behind it, the cry of ‘popolo’ seems itself to have been seen as an attack on the regime. In December 1527 Benedetto Buondelmonti was condemned and imprisoned by the *Quarantia* for his cry in the *contado* that he would ring the church bells and ‘rouse the *popolo*’.<sup>55</sup> He was charged in a notification of wanting to rouse a tumult, make the *contado* revolt and ‘overthrow the regime’.<sup>56</sup> Buondelmonti admitted having said that he wanted to ring the bells, but argued that he had been attempting not to overthrow the regime, but merely to protect his possessions from servants of the Syndics, there to confiscate his goods for non-payment of debts to the commune.<sup>57</sup> Yet to have wanted

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Letters of Antonio Suriano and Lorenzo Bertolotti, 7 November 1528; B. Carnesecchi, ‘L’ Assedio di Firenze’, ed. L. Gentile, *Studi Storici*, xiv (Pisa 1905), p. 457; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 176; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 81; Idem, ‘Vita’, pp. 325-6; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 26; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 359-60.

<sup>49</sup> Giannotti, *Repubblica fiorentina*, p. 197; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 82.

<sup>50</sup> Anon., ‘Diario, 1521-1532’, f. 22<sup>v</sup>; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlix, coll. 144-5, 152-3; Carnesecchi, ‘Assedio’, p. 457; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 81.

<sup>51</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 359.

<sup>52</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 130, ff. 197<sup>r-v</sup> (6 November 1528).

<sup>53</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, pp. 81-2; Idem, ‘Vita’, p. 326.

<sup>54</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 130, f. 197<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>55</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 129, ff. 285<sup>v</sup>, 291<sup>r</sup> (10 December 1527); A.S.F., Balie, 46, ff. 233<sup>v</sup>-4<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> B.N.F., F.P. II III 433, f. 83<sup>r</sup>: ‘Raguaglio del caso di Benedetto Buondelmonti per Messer Filippo suo figliuolo’; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 209.

<sup>57</sup> ‘Raguaglio’, f. 83<sup>v</sup>.



to rouse the *popolo* was enough to have him condemned for a crime against the *status* whether he intended to overthrow the regime or not.<sup>58</sup>

The cry of 'popolo' did not have to be judged in this way. A member of the emergency court, Messer Baldassare Carducci, had defended Alamanni on the grounds that his cry had been made in a quarrel with a private citizen and thus his crime was not 'against the regime' or of '*lesa maiestatis*'.<sup>59</sup> And at other times Carducci's view was the only one held by members of the regime. In 1504 Carlo Federighi violently broke out of the Stinche where he had been imprisoned for debt,<sup>60</sup> and as he did so cried 'popolo, popolo'.<sup>61</sup> A *pratica* on the case may have shown concern that Federighi had 'called upon the public' and cried 'popolo' and 'libertà' as if 'he were living in a tyranny' and thus particularly required heavy punishment,<sup>62</sup> but the crime was not seen as an attack on the regime and the *pratica* was more concerned with the escape and the injury to creditors.<sup>63</sup> Federighi's cry was seen as no more than a call for support and aid in his escape, a serious offence in itself, so the *Otto* ordered Federighi to return to jail under pain of sentence of death, and his brother and others were condemned only for helping him escape and were exiled.<sup>64</sup>

The popular government of the last republic, under siege from the autumn of 1529 until its capitulation in August 1530, had many cases of individuals who aided those threatening the territorial security of the republic, which could be tried by the *Quarantia* as *casus status*. For example a notification of October 1529 concerned a 'plot' (*trattato*) of Fra Vittorio Franceschi to give the rampart of San Miniato to the enemy and his attempt to persuade a captain in Florentine service to join him.<sup>65</sup> It was accepted by the *Quarantia* as a notification 'de statu', and the friar was

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<sup>58</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 129, f. 285<sup>v</sup>; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 14; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 167.

<sup>59</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 161; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 82; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 360.

<sup>60</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 106, f. 46<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>61</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 129, f. 33<sup>f</sup>; Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, f. 13<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, f. 13<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>63</sup> *Consulte e Pratiche della repubblica fiorentina, 1498-1505*, ed. D. Fachard, (Florence, 1993), pp. 1002-3.

<sup>64</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 129, ff. 33<sup>v</sup>, 36<sup>f</sup> (May 1504).

<sup>65</sup> Anon., 'Diario, 1521-1536', f. 26<sup>v</sup>; Sanudo, *Diarii*, lii, col. 104, 174-5; P. Giovio, *Historiarum sui temporis*, ed. D. Visconti (Rome, 1964), p. 156; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 202; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 199; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 36; Varchi, *Storia*, ii, pp. 139-40.

subsequently executed.<sup>66</sup> Not only joining the enemy's camp but helping others to do so could be a *casus status*, and it was on these grounds that Zanobi Bracci and Agostino del Nero were condemned by the *Quarantia* in April 1530,<sup>67</sup> having aided Zanobi's brother, Lorenzo.<sup>68</sup>

Such aid to the enemy, although a *casus status*, was described very differently from a conspiracy to overthrow the regime. The condemnation of Fra Vittorio describes the dangers his acts posed to the 'city' (*città*).<sup>69</sup> Those found guilty of fighting for the enemy,<sup>70</sup> or seizing control of forts for them, or giving away towns in the *contado* to the enemy,<sup>71</sup> were condemned by the *Quarantia* for acts against their 'country' (*patria*), 'city' (*civitas*), or 'republic' (*res publica*). The standard condemnation for joining the enemy camp, and aiding enemy forces, and as it was described in Statutes,<sup>72</sup> was for acts against the men, persons, subjects and 'populus' of the 'commune of Florence' and 'in great injury and shame of the republic of Florence'.<sup>73</sup> Although *casus-status* there is no hint that they were perceived as acts *against* the *status* or intended to overturn it, or as acts aimed against the regime, not just the territorial integrity of the republic.

Yet during the siege Florence was facing an army dedicated to the overthrow of the regime, as in 1512. Then the *Signoria* could put a price on the head of a man who 'came against the republic for the occasion of disturbing the peaceful condition of the commune of Florence'.<sup>74</sup> Florentines did perceive that aid to the enemy during the siege was aimed 'against this government', as the Venetian ambassador described

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<sup>66</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 131, ff. 219<sup>r</sup>, 222<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>67</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 132, ff. 236<sup>r</sup>-7<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>68</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Notificazioni e Querele, 1, ff. 23<sup>r</sup>-4<sup>r</sup>, 26<sup>r-v</sup>; Anonymous, 'Diario d' incerto del 1529 e 1530 dell' assedio', B.N.F., Magl., XXV, 555, f. 140<sup>r</sup>; Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 226.

<sup>69</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 131, f. 222<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>70</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 132, ff. 61<sup>r</sup>, 69<sup>r</sup> (16 December 1529); Ibid., 132, f. 154<sup>r</sup> (17 February 1530), f. 162<sup>v</sup> (22 February); Ibid., 133, f. 48<sup>v</sup> (13 June 1530); ff. 94<sup>r</sup>, 101<sup>r</sup> (3 August 1530).

<sup>71</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 132, ff. 192<sup>r</sup>, 193<sup>v</sup> (15 March 1530); Ibid., 133, ff. 83<sup>r-v</sup> (12 July 1530).

<sup>72</sup> *Statuta*, i, pp. 283-4.

<sup>73</sup> A.S.F., O.G. 206, ff. 26<sup>r</sup>-7<sup>f</sup> (30 September 1529), 47<sup>r</sup> (6 November), 53<sup>r</sup> (19 November); A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 132, f. 19<sup>v</sup> (15 November).

<sup>74</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 114, f. 90<sup>r</sup> (23 August 1512): 'venit contra rem publicam occasione turbandi pacificum statum communis Florentie'.

the crimes of Fra Vittorio.<sup>75</sup> One notification against a man who was giving news of the ‘government’ to the enemy described him as wanting to ‘return to the condition he was in at the time of the tyrant’.<sup>76</sup> Francesco Guicciardini was condemned by the *Quarantia* in March 1530 and declared an outlaw (*ribello*) for the ‘injuries’ he had caused the ‘city’,<sup>77</sup> having been accused of working with the Pope and writing letters ‘against the city’, yet the accusation also described his crimes as against the ‘liberty of the city’ and ‘against the regime’.<sup>78</sup> The *Quarantia* itself condemned a ‘traitor of his country’ who raised parts of the dominion against the city on behalf of the imperialists as the ‘most capital enemy of his city’ and ‘enemy of this most holy liberty’.<sup>79</sup> Two others who fought with the enemy or otherwise aided them were condemned for working ‘against this regime’ and committing acts against the ‘city and popular condition’.<sup>80</sup>

When not actually using force to return to the city, the Medici were always suspected of conspiring to do so. Contact with outlaws (*ribelli*), as some but not all of the Medici were after 1494, such as forming commercial or marriage relations or even just consorting with them was regulated by statute,<sup>81</sup> not least, it was explained, because it could encourage acts against the regime.<sup>82</sup> However, such contact was not in itself seen as an act against the regime, but could be construed as part of a conspiracy to overthrow the government. This is what happened to Filippo Strozzi when news of his marriage to Clarice de’ Medici, Piero’s daughter, reached Florence in December 1508, although largely ignored in modern accounts.<sup>83</sup> A trial in March 1506 of Piero Pitti, whose son was alleged to have contracted a marriage with

<sup>75</sup> E. Albèri, ed., *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, Ser. 2, i (Florence, 1839), p. 240: Letter of Carlo Capello, 29 October 1529.

<sup>76</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Notificazioni e Querele, 1, f. 26<sup>v</sup> (April 1530).

<sup>77</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 132, f. 197<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>78</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Opere inedite*, ed. G. Canestrini, x (Florence, 1867), pp. 141-7: Francesco Guicciardini to the Otto di Guardia, 2 March 1530.

<sup>79</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 132, ff. 186<sup>r-v</sup> (March 1530).

<sup>80</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 132, ff. 82<sup>r</sup>, 87<sup>r</sup> (27 December 1529): ‘contro a questo stato’; *Ibid.*, f. 157<sup>r</sup> (19 February 1530): ‘contra civitatem et popularem statum’.

<sup>81</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 179; *Idem*, *Storia*, p. 360.

<sup>82</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 149, ff. 4<sup>r</sup>5<sup>v</sup> (January 1511), gives the text of a law of January 1497, reissued after the plot of 1510, and banning contact with Cardinal Giovanni and Giuliano de’ Medici, under pain of being declared an outlaw. The law states that such contact was not only “a disgrace to the whole city” but could produce “disorders”, by giving “courage and hope” to rebels to try return to the city.

<sup>83</sup> Bullard, *Filippo Strozzi*, pp. 47-60; Butters, *Governors*, pp. 130-34.

Clarice, seems to have proceeded solely on the basis that to contract marriage with the daughter of an outlaw was against the 'orders and the law of the city', as the author of the notification of the crime to the *Otto* described it, although because the marriage had not been completed, Pitti was absolved by the *Quarantia*.<sup>84</sup>

According to Guicciardini, the Gonfalonier, Piero Soderini, and other members of the regime, argued that Filippo had not acted by himself and that he had been encouraged by those of 'greater authority' wanting, under the shade of making such a marriage, to conspire to 'overthrow the regime' and readmit the Medici.<sup>85</sup> According to Guicciardini, Soderini and his supporters were behind a notification against Strozzi that accused twelve named citizens of being involved in the negotiations and were thought to have been behind a later one that alleged that Strozzi had contracted the marriage 'in order to overthrow the regime'.<sup>86</sup> Soderini certainly supported it, worked to persuade people that Filippo was 'restless and seditious', and gave a speech to the Great Council aiming to emphasize that the marriage had been made to the end of 'overthrowing the regime'.<sup>87</sup> The *Signoria* informed a Florentine ambassador that the marriage concerned the 'liberty and unity of this republic', and could produce only 'disorder and scandal'.<sup>88</sup> Alfonso Strozzi, supporting the Gonfalonier, said that it was necessary to cut the heads off those involved in the negotiations in order to 'heal the city'.<sup>89</sup> Such views, according to Cerretani, were not restricted to Soderini and his supporters in the regime.<sup>90</sup> Rumours spread around the city against those named as involved in the negotiations that they aimed to overthrow the regime and most 'citizens of middle rank' were said to have suspected that the negotiations involved *pratiche* of 'overthrowing the regime'.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 108, ff. 19<sup>v</sup>, 22<sup>v</sup>-23<sup>r</sup> (March 1506); Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, f. 98<sup>r</sup>; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 289, 326; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 119; Idem, *Storia*, p. 344.

<sup>85</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 326; Idem, *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 228.

<sup>86</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 327, 329.

<sup>87</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', p. xvi, F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 329.

<sup>88</sup> A.S.F., Sig., Missive., 56, ff. 128<sup>r-v</sup> (23 December 1508).

<sup>89</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 331.

<sup>90</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 179; Idem, *Storia*, p. 361.

<sup>91</sup> A.S.F., C. Stroz., Ser. III, 134, f. 52<sup>r</sup>: Giovanbattista Cei to Messer Giovanni Strozzi, 16 December 1508; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 330, 332.

Strozzi denied that prominent citizens were involved in the negotiations,<sup>92</sup> and before the *Otto* he denied any intention of ‘disturbing the peaceful condition of the city’.<sup>93</sup> His family and many members of the regime supported his case that he ‘had not acted against the regime’ since the marriage had been made simply of his own impulse without the counsel of others, and without any concern for public affairs and there had been no ‘conspiracy’ or discussions ‘against the regime’.<sup>94</sup> In the end Strozzi was absolved of all charges but that of the marriage itself, for which he was fined and exiled to Naples for three years.<sup>95</sup>

Throughout records of the *Otto di Guardia* and the *Quarantia* of the period there are condemnations for unnamed words said to be ‘against’, or in ‘dishonour’ or ‘shame’ (*dedecus, vilipendius, verecundia, vituperius*), of the ‘present peaceful condition’ (*presentis pacificus status*) of the city. Similar condemnations can be found in the fifteenth century during the Laurentian regime.<sup>96</sup> During the Medici regime after 1512 such condemnations can occasionally be found for words against the ‘present peaceful and best (*optimus*) condition’ of the city, while during the popular regime of the last republic they can be found, although on only two occasions, for words against the ‘present peaceful and popular (*popularis*) condition’. A condemnation for conspiracy in 1400 refers to the plot as against ‘the present popular, guelf and free condition of the city of Florence’, but there appears to be no precedent for the Medicean description in a condemnation of the *status*, condition, of the city being ‘best’.<sup>97</sup>

That those who spoke against the ‘popular’ regime of the last republic were condemned for crimes against the ‘popular’ condition of the city is perhaps less surprising than that such descriptions were rare, and appear to be a revival not of the

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<sup>92</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. III, 134, f. 51<sup>r</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, 22 December 1508.

<sup>93</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 143, f. 23<sup>v</sup>: ‘turbandi pacificum statum civitatis Florentie’.

<sup>94</sup> Strozzi, ‘Vita’, pp. xviii-ix, xxi-ii; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 327; Idem, *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 229; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 177.

<sup>95</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 143, ff. 24<sup>r-v</sup>; Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 111, f. 8<sup>v</sup> (January 1509).

<sup>96</sup> Brown, ‘Public Opinion’, p. 62 n. 4.

<sup>97</sup> *Le ‘Consulte’ e ‘Pratiche’ della repubblica fiorentina*, ed. E. Conti, i (1401) (Florence, 1981), p. 36 n. 5: Condemnation for ‘tractatum factum et hactenus ordinatum contra presentem statum popularem, guelfum et liberum civitatis Florentie’.

practice of the popular regime of before 1512, but of the medieval commune, as was so much of the last republic.<sup>98</sup> More remarkable however, in both its contrast and its novelty, is the hitherto unnoticed fact those who spoke against the Medicean regime after 1512 were condemned for crimes against the 'best' condition of the city. Since condemnations by the popular regime did not use the term, it may well be that the use of *optimus* to describe the *status*, the condition of the city under the Medici, reflects not just a certain insecurity of the regime concerning its legitimacy but an attempt to attribute to it an 'optimate' or aristocratic, as opposed to 'popular', character.<sup>99</sup>

In the Medicean period the records of the *Otto* contain sentences of exile or imprisonment where the only reason given is that the punishment was made 'for the conservation of the present optimate and peaceful condition (*status*) and government (*regimen*) of the Florentine people (*populus*)'. This phrase contains no mention of a crime having been committed, and the conservation of the *status* was often used by both Medicean and popular regimes to justify measures by which magistracies could act beyond the law, such as the granting of *balia* to the *Otto*.<sup>100</sup> Actions by the executive outside the law were traditionally sanctioned as for the public good and the 'peaceful condition of the city'.<sup>101</sup> The *Signoria* for example justified the immediate execution of the five leaders of the plot of 1497 and the denial of their right to an appeal on the grounds of providing for the 'undamaged health of the republic'.<sup>102</sup> It was on the grounds of the 'conservation' of the 'peaceful condition of the *popolo*' that the *Otto* justified in October 1512 the exile of Piero Soderini and other members of his family,<sup>103</sup> simply because, according to contemporaries, they were the deposed Gonfalonier and his family.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Albertini, *Staatsbewusstsein*, pp. 122-46; Gilbert, 'Venetian Constitution', p. 499.

<sup>99</sup> Rubinstein, 'Notes', pp. 316-7.

<sup>100</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 99, f. 79<sup>r</sup> (September 1497); Ibid., 108, f. 75<sup>v</sup> (September 1506); Ibid., 120, f. 88<sup>v</sup> (September 1518).

<sup>101</sup> L. Martines, *Lawyers and Statecraft in Renaissance Florence* (Princeton, 1968), pp. 411, 426-31.

<sup>102</sup> A.S.F., Sig., e Coll., Delib., o.a., 99, ff. 74<sup>v</sup>-5<sup>r</sup> (21 August 1497); Martines, *Lawyers*, pp. 442-4.

<sup>103</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 154, ff. 74<sup>v</sup>-5<sup>r</sup>: Condemnation 'pro conservatione presentis optimi et pacifici status et regiminis populi Florentini'.

<sup>104</sup> Anon., 'Diario istorico', f. 96<sup>r</sup>; F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, i, ed. R. Palmarocchi (Bologna, 1938), p. 110; Luigi Guicciardini to Francesco Guicciardini, 23 October 1512; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 292, 294; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 118.

The condemnation of Giovanni Folchi, who was found to have known of but not revealed the plot of 1513, to be imprisoned in the fortress of Volterra for five years and then banished from the city for life, was made on the grounds of the ‘conservation’ of the ‘condition’ of the ‘popolo’, so it is clear that the phrase was used to condemn overt acts against the regime.<sup>105</sup> The legal records themselves occasionally show that a condemnation *pro conservatione status populi* was made to punish crimes, and one such in August 1513 of a linen weaver, Francesco di Giovanni di Monaldo,<sup>106</sup> was described by the *Otto* elsewhere as for having ‘committed certain errors’.<sup>107</sup> Indeed, following the exile of the Soderini, the condemnation seems to have been used only in this way. Only one of the ten other occasions when the regime punished individuals *pro conservatione status populi*, most of which occurred in 1513, cannot be shown from other sources to have been on account of an overt act against the regime, and that act was always, with the notable exception of Folchi, a verbal attack against the regime. Martino Scarfi and Alessandro Manetti for example, were both banished from the city for five years in January 1513 for the ‘conservation’ of the ‘condition’ of the ‘popolo’,<sup>108</sup> and while it has been recently suggested that they were plotting against the regime,<sup>109</sup> Cerretani clearly records that they were condemned for ‘certain words spoken against the regime’.<sup>110</sup>

Florentines did not have any doubt that, as Savonarola put it, ‘speaking contemptuously of the regime’ was ‘*crimen lesae maiestatis*’.<sup>111</sup> Yet what constituted speaking against the regime was not always clear. Speech described in condemnations as concerning the *status* could take the form of actually stating that

<sup>105</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 155, f. 42<sup>v</sup> (2 March 1513): Condemnation ‘*pro conservatione presentis optimi et pacifici status et regiminis populi Florentini*’.

<sup>106</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 156, f. 78<sup>v</sup> (16 August 1513): Condemnation ‘*pro conservatione presentis optimi et pacifici status et regiminis populi et communis Florentie*’ to be banished from the city for one year. Francesco is described as a ‘*textor pannorum lineorum*’.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 230 (Libro di Condanne), f. 117<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>108</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 155, ff. 15<sup>r-v</sup> (22 January 1513): Condemnations ‘*pro conservatione presentis optimi et pacifici status et regiminis populi Florentini*’. Scarfi was exiled to Empoli, Manetti to the Mugello.

<sup>109</sup> Polizzotto, ‘The Medici’, p. 144; *Idem*, *Elect Nation*, p. 260.

<sup>110</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 298: ‘*per certe parole dicte contro allo stato*’.

<sup>111</sup> G. Savonarola, *Prediche sopra i Salmi*, ed. V. Romano, ii (Rome, 1974), p. 191: ‘*quelli che parlano di questo stato paghino cinquanta ducati, quia est crimen lesae maiestatis*’.

the regime should be overthrown. Thus the *Quarantia* judged as a 'casus status',<sup>112</sup> Carlo Cocchi's words against 'the present government' at beginning of the siege in October 1529,<sup>113</sup> in which he suggested that 'here one should make a *parlamento*', try to accord with Pope and readmit the Medici rather than await war.<sup>114</sup> Members of the *Quarantia* recalled more than once, according to Varchi, the lines of Savonarola that had been reinscribed in 1527 in the hall of the Great Council, that 'whoever wants to make a *parlamento*, wants to remove the government from your hands'.<sup>115</sup>

Those who outspokenly rejected the legitimacy of those in government could also be condemned for words against the *status*. This for example, would seem to have been the reason for the condemnation of Girolamo degli Albizzi's words concerning the 'regime' (*reggimento*) as against the 'present popular and peaceful condition' by the *Quarantia* in 1528.<sup>116</sup> Albizzi had been accused of speaking 'in contempt of the present good government' (*governo*), specifically that he had said that 'he was of the Albizzi and that he did not want to be managed by this loutish rabble and riff-raff that at present governs the city, and that one did not expect such louts that govern today to govern it' as well as other words against the 'present government'.<sup>117</sup>

The Medici regime condemned those who spoke against the Medici family for crimes against the *status*. The condemnation of Francesco Marchi in April 1513 for having in Parenti's words 'spoken ill of the Medici',<sup>118</sup> may have been the first

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<sup>112</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 132, ff. 208<sup>r</sup>, 210<sup>r</sup> (13 October 1529): Presentation of a 'notificatione de statu' and decision to judge it as 'casus status'.

<sup>113</sup> F. Rinnucini, *Ricordi storici di Filippo di Cino Rinuccini dal 1282 al 1460 colla continuazione di Alamanno e Neri suoi figli fino al 1506*, ed. G. Aiazzi (Florence, 1840), p. cxcii: 'per avere sparlato qualcosa contro a questo reggimento presente'; Giannotti, *Repubblica fiorentina*, p. 194.

<sup>114</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 65, n. 48: Gianbattista Tosinchi to Cechotto Tosinchi, 12 October 1529, 'qui si dovrebbe fare parlamento'; A.S.Mo., Canc. Duc., Firenze, 15, (unfoliated): Alessandro Guarini to the Duke, 15 and 20 October 1529, 'perchè havea havuto a dire che si vorrà fare parlamento et vedere di acconciarsi col Papa'; Anon., 'Diario, 1521-1532', f. 26<sup>r</sup>: 'per avere ditto si fachiesi parlamento'; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 199; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 213; Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 138.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139. On this inscription see N. Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio 1298-1532: Government, Architecture and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 72-3, 96.

<sup>116</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 130, f. 85<sup>r</sup> (3 May 1528): 'contra presentem popularem et pacificum statum'.

<sup>117</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 201 (Libro di Notificazioni), f. 131<sup>r</sup> (27 March 1528).

<sup>118</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 89<sup>v</sup>.



such prosecution after the Medici family's return to the city.<sup>119</sup> Words against the Medici needed be no more than contemptuous, making no explicit threats or comments on the health of their position in the city to concern the *status*. When Francesco del Pugliese 'contemptuously' described the younger Lorenzo, as 'the Magnificent shit (*merda*)' in September 1513,<sup>120</sup> he was deemed to have 'spoken ill of the regime',<sup>121</sup> and he was condemned for crimes in shame and dishonour of the 'status', and banished from the city for ten years.<sup>122</sup> Giovanbattista Petrucci may have been questioning the legality of that condemnation but in effect he repeated the insult in saying that del Pugliese had erred little in his speaking,<sup>123</sup> and so he too was condemned for words in dishonour of the 'status'. Since his words also questioned a judgement of the *Otto* they were also condemned as against and in dishonour of the office and magistracy of the *Otto*.<sup>124</sup>

Words against Giovanni de' Medici, the Pope and head of the Medici family, could also be against the *status*. Larione Buonguglielmi was condemned for speaking against the 'status' and the Christian religion for his 'dishonest, indecent and shameful' words during the papal visit to Florence in December 1515.<sup>125</sup> Buonguglielmi's 'disgraceful speech against the Pontiff', according to Parenti, had arisen as a result of the 'increasing bother and expense' caused by the ornaments and

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<sup>119</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 155, ff. 63<sup>r-v</sup> (18 April 1513): Condemnation for words 'ignominiosa turpia et inhonesta ... contra presentem optimum et pacificum statum et regimen florentinum et contra officium et Magistratum dicti Otto et in vilipendium dedecus et verecundiam dicti status... et pro conservatione presentis pacifici optimi status et regiminis populi Florentini'.

<sup>120</sup> Anon., 'Diario istorico', f. 98<sup>r</sup>; Landucci, *Diario*, p. 341; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 28.

<sup>121</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 310: 'per havere sparlato dello stato'.

<sup>122</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 157, f. 24<sup>v</sup> (29 September 1513): Condemnation for 'errores et inconvenientibus ... in vilipendium et dedecus presentis pacifici status et regiminis populi florentini'; A.S.F., Baliè, 43, f. 198<sup>r</sup> (7 December 1515): Absolution from having 'usato certe parole in dishonore di questo presente stato et governo'.

<sup>123</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 99<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>124</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 157, f. 37<sup>r</sup> (14 October 1513): Condemnation for words 'vituperativa turpia et vilipendiosa contra officium et Magistratum dicti Otto et vilipendium ignominium et dedecus presentis optimi pacifici status populi Florentie et dicti Magistratus et personarum eiusdem' for which he was fined and confined out of the city for three years. *Ibid.*, 230 (Libro di Condanne), f. 122<sup>r</sup>: 'più parole vituperose contro al magistrato delli Otto et in vergogna del presente pacifico stato'.

<sup>125</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 163, f. 56<sup>v</sup> (16 December 1515): Condemnation for words 'inonesta, indecentia et turpia ... contra Christianum Religionem et contra presentem pacificum statum et bonum regimen populi et communis Florentie'; *Ibid.*, 230 (Libro di Condanne), f. 172<sup>v</sup>: 'più parole inhoneste contro alla religione Christiana e contro al presente pacifico stato'.

other preparations required for the Pope's passage near his villa, and he seems to have 'spat out' the desire to make a mocking version of the papal entry to the city.<sup>126</sup>

Such insults to the Medici were taken as insults to the regime. They were deemed to have questioned the legitimacy of the regime just as Albizzi had done, and it was on that basis that those who made them were condemned. For the leadership of the regime exercised by members of the Medici family had no official position within the Florentine constitutional structure. Yet since the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent the Medicean regime had identified an act against the Medici, with an act against the regime. At the time of the conspiracy to murder Lorenzo in 1481, the *Signoria* and the Council of Seventy declared that 'who attacks ('offende') or will attack Lorenzo, will commit *crimen lesae maiestatis*', on the grounds that since one was governing 'by means of Lorenzo' those who conspired against one of the 'principal and optimate' men of the city, as the condemnation described him, were conspiring to overthrow the regime.<sup>127</sup> No such declaration seems to have been made on the Medici return of 1512, and the condemnations for conspiracy do not refer to it. Yet a notification if not the *Otto* themselves could describe a conspiracy against Cardinal Giulio de' Medici to be 'chrimine lese maiestatis'.<sup>128</sup> Giulio was a 'Florentine citizen', but since he was the 'benefactor and protector and most eager defender' of the 'country' (*patria*) and 'present peaceful condition' who 'should be called *Pater Patriae* by public decree', as one condemnation by the *Otto* in 1522 described him,<sup>129</sup> any act against him was an act against the *status*. That insults to the Medici family were condemned as crimes against the *status* because they were seen as insults to the regime was thus a measure both of the extent of Medici leadership as well as of its limits.

Whilst insults to the Medici family were seen as insults to the regime, that does not seem to have been the case with insults to their servants, those such as Goro

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<sup>126</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 124<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>127</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 58, ff. 66<sup>r</sup>, 74<sup>r</sup> (1481); Capelli, ed., 'Lettere', p. 255: Antonio da Montecatini to Duke Ercole d' Este, 9 June 1481.

<sup>128</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, f. 67<sup>r</sup> (August 1522): Condemnation for a false accusation 'de gravissimis delictis de chrimine lese maiestatis et de qualiter prefati conspirare volebant contra reverendissima et illustrissimum cardinalem de Medicis'.

<sup>129</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, ff. 58<sup>r</sup>, 59<sup>v</sup>.

Gheri who represented Medici interests in the city during their absence. In January 1518 Gheri, a native of Pistoia, felt himself, and it seems 'the regime', to have been insulted by a masquerade that showed that 'the citizens in this time serve the peasants'. However, as Parenti records, the regime did not proceed 'keenly' against the perpetrators. Although the youths responsible were summoned by the *Otto*, they confessed to have done it simply to show 'precise things', rather than to attack Gheri or the regime, and only one was punished, with a fine.<sup>130</sup>

Words that merely predicted the imminent overthrow of the regime were condemned as against the *status*. Carlo de' Medici was absolved from an accusation in January 1528 that he had said 'the popular regime will have a short life',<sup>131</sup> but the *Quarantia* had accepted the case for trial having judged the words to be against the 'present popular peaceful condition'.<sup>132</sup> Such prognostication was also condemned as in shame of the *status* by the Medicean regime, and it was on these grounds that Andrea Rinuccini and Francesco Carcherelli were each condemned in the summer of 1518. They were found to have attacked 'the regime', when Rinuccini said to a Medici supporter, Domenico Canigiani, that although Canigiani and his 'friends' were 'more powerful than he now', one day Canigiani 'would lack friends and he would lack neither friends nor arms',<sup>133</sup> which Parenti interpreted as meaning that the 'faction opposed' (*parte avversa*) to Canigiani's 'within a short time would have more favour in Florence.'<sup>134</sup> Since Canigiani was the commissioner of Prato, the words were condemned as in dishonour of that office as well as of the 'status'.<sup>135</sup>

Forecasts of the imminent overthrow of the regime did not have to be so explicit. They were implied in any praise of the strength of the regime's foreign

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<sup>130</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 137<sup>r</sup>: 'haverlo facto semplicemente per mostrare chose strette'. No such fine is recorded in the *partiti* of the *Otto*.

<sup>131</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 201 (Libro di Notificazioni), f. 8<sup>v</sup>: 'lo stato popolano ora mai ha poca vita'.

<sup>132</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 130, ff. 14<sup>r</sup>, 24<sup>r</sup>: 'contra presentem popularem pacificum statum'.

<sup>133</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, iv, ff. 270<sup>v</sup>-271<sup>r</sup>: Goro Gheri to Lorenzo de' Medici, 6 August 1518, 'non offendeva solo el commissario ma lo stato di Firenze'.

<sup>134</sup> Parenti; 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 140<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>135</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 171, f. 63<sup>r</sup> (30 July 1518): Condemnation of Rinuccini, 'pro conservatione presentis optimi pacifici status et regiminis populi Florentini' to be exiled to Ascoli for three years; *Ibid.*, f. 68<sup>v</sup> (3 August): Condemnation of Carcherelli for words 'contumeliosa et inhonesta' against the commissioner and his honour and 'in dedecus presentis pacifici status et regiminis populi et communis Florentie' to be banished from the Florentine dominion for two years; c.f. *Ibid.*, 230, f. 230<sup>v</sup> (3 August) 'parole ingiuriose al commissario di Prato in sua vergogna et dello stato Fiorentino.'

enemies. Thus Martino Scarfi's remarks in 1523 concerning the fortune of the French army in Lombardy, and the possible election of a pro-French Pope, 'to which he was giving great favour' were taken as 'against the regime',<sup>136</sup> and he was condemned for words in shame of the 'status'.<sup>137</sup> Indeed even predicting a war with the regime's foreign enemies could be seen in this light. When the city was allied to Spain against France Bartolomeo Pandolfini was deemed to have 'spoken contemptuously against the regime' in December 1514 having said that his cousin, Francesco Pandolfini, ambassador in France, had written that he would soon be chased out of France or recalled to Florence.<sup>138</sup> Under examination Bartolomeo confessed that Francesco had written no such thing.<sup>139</sup> His words were deemed to have insulted Florence as well as the regime, so he was condemned for words against the honour of the 'Florentine republic' as well as 'a certain person'.<sup>140</sup> Yet elsewhere the *Otto* described them as against the 'present peaceful condition'.<sup>141</sup>

Predictions of the overthrow of the regime occasionally came in the form of prophesy, when the process of condemnation appears to have been more complicated. In June 1513 the *Otto* arrested two friars of Ognissanti and Giusto della Badessa who 'under the name of prophesy', Parenti recorded, 'were foretelling revolution in the city and elsewhere'.<sup>142</sup> Examined under torture the friars were found not to have 'foundation', according to Parenti,<sup>143</sup> and were sentenced to periods of banishment from the city which they could avoid on payment of a fine.<sup>144</sup> Parenti did not mean, as has been claimed, that the charges were in any way 'trumped up'.<sup>145</sup> Proceedings against prophesy were normally made on the basis that it was found not

<sup>136</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 434: 'parole contro allo stato'.

<sup>137</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 187, ff. 26<sup>v</sup>-27<sup>r</sup> (1 October 1523): Condemnation for words 'in dedecus et vituperium presentis pacifici status et boni regiminis civitatis et communis Florentie'.

<sup>138</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXVI, nn. 590, 608: Galeotto de' Medici to Lorenzo de' Medici, 16 and 20 December 1514; Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 111<sup>r</sup>: 'havea sparlato contro al presente reggimento'.

<sup>139</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXVI, nn. 611, 627: Galeotto de' Medici to Lorenzo de' Medici, 22 and 28 December 1514.

<sup>140</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 160, f. 75<sup>v</sup> (31 December 1514): Condemnation for words 'contra honorem et decus rei publice florentine ac etiam quamdam personam cuius nomen pro meliore tacetur'.

<sup>141</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 230 (Libro di Condanne), f. 155<sup>r</sup>: 'certe parole contro al presente pacifico stato'.

<sup>142</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 156, f. 20<sup>v</sup>; Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 93<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 94<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>144</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 230 (Libro di Condanne), f. 108<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>145</sup> D. Weinstein, *Savonarola and Florence: Prophecy and Patriotism in the Renaissance* (Princeton, 1970), p. 348.

to have 'foundation' in scripture or to have been received from God, and that it did not have the 'foundation' it was claimed to have.<sup>146</sup> Parenti may have been referring to this or, more likely, he may have meant that the friars were not found to have been part of some grander scheme to attack the regime, for with regard to prophesy that foretold of the overthrow of the government, whether it was founded on scripture or the hopes and machinations of opponents of the regime were clearly part of the same question.

In May 1505 a 'peasant worker or factor' who was saying 'openly' that there would soon be 'confusion' in the city, that citizens would be killed and that the 'Gonfalonier would be toppled from power', claimed to have received his vision from God.<sup>147</sup> Soderini was suspicious, according to Parenti, that the *contadino* had been 'induced by citizens', and so had him examined by the *Otto*. The *contadino* maintained his claim that what he had spoken was 'the truth', that 'as he had spoken, so it would be', that 'God was showing him these things', and that 'he had it from God and not from others'.<sup>148</sup> That the *contadino* does not seem to have been condemned whereas della Badessa and the friars in 1513 were, may be because he was more obstinate than they about the divine source of his prophesy and was not found to have been speaking 'under the name of prophesy', or it may be an indication of a more nervous attitude towards such prophesy on the part of the Medici regime.

Whether they had been induced by others was probably the focus of the examination of della Badessa and the friars in 1513, and Parenti records that it was discovered that Messer Bartolomeo Redditi had previously spoken with the friars 'of the affairs of Savonarola'.<sup>149</sup> Thus he and the provost of Ognissanti were also condemned with the three arrested, for the 'conservation' of the 'condition' of the 'popolo'.<sup>150</sup> There is no evidence in either their condemnation or the account of Parenti to support recent assertions that Redditi and the others were, or were

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<sup>146</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, pp. 303, 308.

<sup>147</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, ff. 58<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>148</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, f. 58<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>149</sup> Parenti, 'Storia' II IV 171, f. 94<sup>r</sup>: 'delle cose di frate Jeronimo'.

<sup>150</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 156, f. 22<sup>v</sup> (11 June 1513): Condemnation 'pro conservatione presentis optimi et pacifici status et regiminis populi et communis Florentie'.

considered to be, 'plotting against the regime'.<sup>151</sup> Rather than being found to have engineered a 'conspiracy' Redditi was condemned purely for having spoken against the regime with those who then publicly foretold its overthrow.

In speaking of Savonarola, Redditi's crime may have been to express loyalty to or belief in the past republican regime and thereby to have attacked the present Medicean one. Ficino Ficini, nephew of the famous neo-platonist, was condemned in the last republic for words 'in honour of the Medici house' and their past regime,<sup>152</sup> which were certainly seen as an attack on the present 'regime'.<sup>153</sup> They were judged 'contra statum' by the *Quarantia* and Ficini was executed.<sup>154</sup> 'Florence', he had said, 'had been better under the *Palle* than under the *popolo*', and the Medici family, having decorated the city with so many churches and buildings, and held the 'dominion' of it for such a long time, possessed of the city 'a greater part than anyone else'.<sup>155</sup>

Savonarola was a figure of religious as well as political significance in Florence, having been a heretic and schismatic burned by the Church, and so expressions of loyalty to his memory were of no less interest to the Archbishop than to the *Otto*. This is reflected in Redditi's sentence, banished for one year from the archbishopric, where the confines of those sentenced with him were defined by civil boundaries.<sup>156</sup> Further, both in the middle and towards the end of his year long sentence, Redditi was summoned to appear before the Archbishop's court before the *Otto* released him.<sup>157</sup>

Expressions of loyalty to Savonarola and his prophesy were not in themselves seen as attacks on the regime, but they were regulated for political reasons. Indeed any prophesy of an impending 'scourge' (*flagello*) and renovation in the Church, even when not accompanied by an overt political message, was regulated for political

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<sup>151</sup> Polizzotto, 'Medici', p. 144; Idem, *Elect Nation*, pp. 261, 262.

<sup>152</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 266; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 221.

<sup>153</sup> Anon., 'Diario dell' assedio', f. 170<sup>v</sup>: 'per haver sparlato dello stato'; B.N.F., Magl., XXV, 555, f. 210<sup>r</sup>: 'Da un libro di Giovambatista Betti', 'per haver cicalato contro lo stato'.

<sup>154</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 133, f. 47<sup>r</sup> (11 June 1530): Presentation of a notification 'de statu' concerning words 'contra statum', and decision to judge it as 'casus status'.

<sup>155</sup> Giovio, *Historiarum*, p. 156; Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 140; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 36.

<sup>156</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 156, f. 22<sup>v</sup>; Ibid., 230 (Libro di Condanne), ff. 108<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>157</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 158, f. 3<sup>r</sup> (January 1514); Ibid., 159, ff. 6<sup>v</sup>, 58<sup>v</sup> (May and June 1514).

reasons. For, as Cerretani wrote, Savonarola's followers invested such prophesy with political significance, remembering their prophet's words that the popular regime would be remade if it was ever harmed, and were encouraged by it to expect and desire a 'new revolution' and the return of 'the past regime'.<sup>158</sup>

The two most celebrated cases of the period, that of Francesco da Montepulciano in December 1513 and of Don Teodoro in February 1515, were both heard in the court of the Archbishop. There is no evidence from the contemporary accounts that the prophesy of either was understood to be an attack on the regime in itself, although Teodoro had praised Savonarola, claimed that he had appeared to him and that he was the Papa Angelico whose coming was prophesied by Savonarola.<sup>159</sup> Indeed in reply to requests from Giulio, then the Archbishop, that action should be taken against Francesco da Montepulciano, Lorenzo replied that 'he has neither said nor done anything that merits taking account of it'.<sup>160</sup> Yet the proceedings against both Francesco and Teodoro were begun at the behest of 'the regime', according to Parenti, because their prophesy 'aroused' and encouraged opponents of the regime.<sup>161</sup>

Immediately following the condemnation of Teodoro, the vicar of the Archbishop issued bans on preaching prophesy if not with the expositions of the 'holy doctors' and on preaching the renovation of the church or other prophesy 'if it does not come from God'.<sup>162</sup> These bans were understood to have been clearly designed to curb the public avowal of prophetic sentiments close to Savonarola's own.<sup>163</sup> From this point the ecclesiastical authorities seem to have been charged with the suppression of the cult of Savonarola's memory and the expression of his

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<sup>158</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 326; Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 97.

<sup>159</sup> B.N.F., Fondo Guicciardini, 3, 4, 46: 'Predica di Frate Francesco da Montepulciano all' ordine di Frate Minore in Santa Croce di Firenze facta a di xxiii Decembre 1513' is one of the sermons for which Francesco was arraigned; 'Processo di Don Theodoro monacho che si faceva chiamare Papa Angelico' ed. A. Prosperi, 'Il monaco Teodoro: Note su un processo fiorentino del 1515', *Critica Storia*, i (1975), pp. 90-97 gives the case against Teodoro. Contemporary accounts are to be found in N. Machiavelli, *Lettere*, ed. F. Gaeta (Turin, 1984), p. 431: Niccolò Machiavelli to Francesco Vettori, 19 December 1513; Parenti 'Storia' ed. Schnitzer, pp. 303, 305-6; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 313, 324-5; Idem, *Dialogo*, pp. 90-1, 95-7; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 39, 60-2; Landucci, *Diario*, pp. 343-4, 349.

<sup>160</sup> O. Tommasini, *La vita e gli scritti di Niccolò Machiavelli*, (Rome, 1911), ii, p. 987: Letter of 24 December 1513.

<sup>161</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, pp. 303, 306; Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, p. 272 n. 146.

<sup>162</sup> 'Processo di Don Theodoro', ed. Prosperi, 'Teodoro', p. 98.

<sup>163</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 326.

prophetic beliefs. So it seems to have been the ecclesiastical authorities, according to Cerretani, who dealt with Fra Spirito on both occasions in 1521 when he preached that Savonarola had appeared to him and told him that a great 'scourge' would come, after which the 'popular regime' would be re-established and a renovation of the Church take place.<sup>164</sup>

The cases looked at so far have all been attacks on the regime and that is why they were condemned as offences against the *status*, the condition, of the city. The regime was the dominant group in government insulted by Albizzi, the party in power whose end was foretold by Rinuccini. It was the group in control of the offices of government, who sat in the offices of government, but it was not the offices themselves. Insults to communal officials and magistrates, even to the supreme executive magistracy of the *Signoria* or its most senior member, the Gonfalonier, were not seen as insults to the regime, and were not condemned as crimes against the *status*.

Some verbal attacks against the regime, such as those of Rinuccini and Petrucci, did involve verbal attacks against communal officials or magistracies, but in these cases accounts make it clear that the attack on the regime was separate from the insult to the official, and the condemnations distinguish between the crime against the official and the crime against the *status*. For example, a weaver from Germany, Bartolo di Giovanni, was condemned in October 1513 for words both against the 'status' and against the magistracy concerned, in his case the *Otto*.<sup>165</sup> Insults of the magistracy of the *Otto* or of individual members of it were not in themselves condemned as against the *status* under any regime.<sup>166</sup> Nor were insults of

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<sup>164</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 383.

<sup>165</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 157, f. 38<sup>v</sup> (15 October 1513): Condemnation for words 'inhonesta et ignominiosa contra presentem pacificum statum et magistratum' for which he was banished from Florentine jurisdiction for five years; *Ibid.*, 230 (Libro di Condanne), f. 122<sup>r</sup>: 'certe parole ignominiosa contra il presente pacifico stato'. Bartolo is described as a 'theutonicus textor ... habitatus nella Via del Fiore'

<sup>166</sup> See for example A.S.F., O.G., 167, f. 44<sup>v</sup> (March 1517): Condemnation for words 'contra quosdam de numero dicti eorum officii in dedecus personarum et contra ipsorum honorem'. Cf. A.S.F., O.G. 127, f. 78<sup>r</sup> (October 1503), *Ibid.*, 157, f. 96<sup>v</sup> (December 1513); *Ibid.*, 168, f. 26<sup>r</sup> (June 1517); *Ibid.*, 187, f. 76<sup>v</sup> (December 1523); *Ibid.*, 206, f. 41<sup>v</sup> (October 1529).



other communal officials and magistracies such as the Twelve Good Men or the Sea Consuls condemned as against the *status*.<sup>167</sup>

Insulting the Priors or the Gonfalonier was considered a grave matter by all regimes, but there is no evidence that it was taken in itself to be an attack on the regime, although it could of course include such an attack. For example, a dyer in 1522 who did not take off his hat before the Priors was condemned for an act 'in shame of the Priors and of the whole Florentine republic', and not for an act against the *status*.<sup>168</sup> The same condemnation was made of Giovanni Ridolfi's 'indecent, insulting, and dishonest' words in the Palace of the *Signoria* in 1505.<sup>169</sup> In June 1506 some figures 'in contempt' of the *Signoria* according to Parenti,<sup>170</sup> 'the most beautiful things you ever saw' according to Piero Pitti, were depicted on the back of the seats in the Duomo where the *Signoria* was to sit the next day to celebrate Corpus Christi.<sup>171</sup> The *Otto* and the *Signoria* issued several bans calling for information concerning the depiction of what were figures, as the bans described them, 'in great dishonour of God and of His most holy church, and of all the city' rather than against the regime.<sup>172</sup>

Physical attacks on the servants of magistracies were also condemned as crimes against the magistrate concerned and not as against the *status*, even when such attacks resulted in the death of the servant concerned.<sup>173</sup> Although there appear

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<sup>167</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 114, f. 77<sup>r</sup> (August 1512), insult of one of the Twelve Good Men; Ibid., 130, 174<sup>r</sup> (September 1528), insult of a servant of the *Signoria*; O.G., 131, f. 63<sup>v</sup> (April 1505), insult of the Sea Consuls; Ibid., 157, f. 40<sup>r</sup> (October 1513), insult of the commissioner of the plague.

<sup>168</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 124, f. 138<sup>r</sup>: 'in dedecus dicti Dominorum et totius Rei Publice Florentie'.

<sup>169</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 107, f. 85<sup>v</sup>-6<sup>r</sup>: 'in maxime dedecus et vilipendium eorum Dominorum et totius populi Florentini'.

<sup>170</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, f. 106<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>171</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 325, f. 90<sup>r</sup>: Piero Pitti to Lorenzo Strozzi, 13 June 1506.

<sup>172</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 222 (Libro di Bandi), ff. 419<sup>r</sup>, 420<sup>r</sup> (10 and 11 June 1506).

<sup>173</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 137, f. 146<sup>r</sup> (July 1507), 152, ff. 60<sup>v</sup>-1<sup>r</sup> (January 1512), assaults on servant of the *Otto*; Ibid., 125, ff. 235<sup>v</sup>-6<sup>r</sup> (April 1503); Ibid. 146, f. 141<sup>r</sup> (March 1510); Ibid. 184, f. 6<sup>r</sup> (September 1522); Ibid., 200, f. 215<sup>v</sup> (December 1527), all killings of servants of the *Otto*. See also A.S.F., O.G., 145, f. 15<sup>r</sup> (September 1509); Ibid., 155, f. 78<sup>r</sup> (April 1513); Ibid., 203, f. 26<sup>r</sup> (September 1528), assaults on servants of the Captain of the Bargello; Ibid., 161, f. 3<sup>r</sup> (May 1515), 195, f. 32<sup>v</sup> (June 1526), assaults on servants of the customs officials; Ibid., 192, f. 100<sup>v</sup> (August 1525), assault on a servant of the *Sei di Mercantia*. Cf notifications in A.S.F., O.G. 145 bis (Libro di Notificazioni), ff. 152<sup>r</sup>, 172<sup>v</sup>-3<sup>r</sup> (January 1510); Ibid., 147 (Libro di Notificazioni), f. 170<sup>r</sup> (July 1510); A.S.F., Nove di Ordinanza e Milizia, Notificazioni e Querele, 1, ff. 15<sup>r</sup>-16<sup>r</sup> (April 1507), 31<sup>r</sup> (February 1508).

to have been no cases of the physical assault of members of the magistracies themselves, there is no reason to suppose that they would have been condemned as crimes against the *status*. The mortal injury of a senior member of the chancery of the *Dieci* for example, was not condemned in this way.<sup>174</sup>

Thus we have not followed here historians of the *popolo minuto* and others and included individual attacks by the lower orders against the officers of the communal courts or magistracies as 'political crime'.<sup>175</sup> However, there are two cases in the period of 1502 to 1530 of physical assaults on servants of communal magistracies being condemned as concerning the *status*, the condition of the city. The assault and injury of a servant of the *Otto* by Donato Ridolfi and three others in July 1513 was condemned as against the honour of the 'status'.<sup>176</sup> Ten years later four men who had broken out of the *Stinche* and assaulted a guard in the process were condemned for a crime against the 'status'.<sup>177</sup> Such condemnations do not mean that either of these acts were seen in anyway to have been against the regime. *Status* here, as in all such condemnations, refers to the prosperous condition of the city. Yet as the public welfare of the city crimes could be committed against the *status* in which no act of opposition to the regime was perceived.

The mutiny of captains in the militia for example, could be condemned as *casus status*. In 1528, Pandolfo Puccini, a captain of Florentine troops, in a dispute over pay killed another captain, resisted arrest, and attempted to escape with some of his company.<sup>178</sup> His 'sedition' was accepted and condemned by *Quarantia* as a 'casus status', and Puccini was sentenced to death.<sup>179</sup> The breaking of a peace

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<sup>174</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Notificazioni e Querele, 1, f. 22<sup>f</sup> (April 1530).

<sup>175</sup> Cohn, *Labouring Classes*, pp. 146, 161-7, 184 n. 12; M. Becker, 'Changing Patterns of Violence and Justice in Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-century Florence', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, xviii (1976), p. 286.

<sup>176</sup>; A.S.F., O.G., 156, f. 55<sup>v</sup>: 'contra honorem et decus presentis pacifici status et dicti officii'; Ibid., 230 (Libro di Condanne), f. 113<sup>v</sup>; A.S.F., Miscellanea Repubblicana, CXVII (Libro di Condanne), f. 57<sup>f</sup>

<sup>177</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 187, ff. 11<sup>v</sup>-12<sup>f</sup> (September 1523): 'contra presentem pacificum et tranquillam statum'.

<sup>178</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 201 (Libro di Notificazioni), f. 116<sup>v</sup>; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxiii, pp. 20-1; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 204; Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 55-6; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 284-6. He was neither accused nor condemned for speaking against the regime as in Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 235-6.

<sup>179</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 130, ff. 53<sup>r-v</sup>, 62<sup>f</sup>-3<sup>f</sup> (April 1528). Ibid., 131, ff. 29<sup>v</sup>-30<sup>f</sup> is the case of another captain, Giuliano di Niccolò Strozzi, in February 1529.

agreement between two families in Castro Foiano in 1504 which erupted into a brawling tumult was condemned as an act against the law, the agreement and the 'condition' of the men and persons of Castro Foiano.<sup>180</sup> Neighbourhood brawls in Florence had been commonly condemned as acts intended to 'disturb' and 'pervert' the 'condition' of the city until at least the mid-fifteenth century, although the above example appears to be the only condemnation of its kind in the period from 1502 to 1530.<sup>181</sup> These condemnations are for acts rather than words against the *status*, and describe the crime clearly. Those crimes against the *status* of which the records give scant information concerning the nature of the crime are all for words, and we can assume that they were so condemned because they were perceived to be against the regime.

As with insults to the *Signoria* and other magistrates, so criticism of policy as expressed in laws or the decisions of magistrates, made both inside and outside the legislature, was not in itself taken to be an attack on the regime, yet it could be construed as part of such an attack.<sup>182</sup> In a *pratica* in May 1530 that concerned itself with the 'slandering' of 'magistrates, particular citizens, principal soldiers and captains' that followed the loss of Empoli, speakers distinguished between those involved according to their intentions.<sup>183</sup> As one speaker put it, some of those talking contemptuously were 'forced by the zeal of their patriotism' fearing that the loss would stun the *Signoria* into thinking of an accord, and these should be dealt with through 'suitable words'; others were moved by 'malignancy' or through 'being given to chattering' and should be treated 'not with words but with deeds and with justice' for 'the example of others'.<sup>184</sup>

Even if they contained no explicit threats or predictions concerning the imminent collapse of the regime criticisms of magistrates and citizens could be seen

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<sup>180</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 130, f. 212<sup>v</sup> (November 1504): 'contra formam dicti treghue et contra bonos mores et contra pacificum et tranquillum statum hominum et personarum dicti Castri Foiani'.

<sup>181</sup> Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, pp. 111-2: An example of July 1344; Cohn, *Labouring Classes*, p. 146.

<sup>182</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 202, f. 133<sup>v</sup>-4<sup>f</sup> (12 August 1528) is a condemnation of two members of the minor guilds for speaking indecently of affairs 'pertinentur ad publicam et rem publicam florentinam', to be lashed twelve times at the *Ponte Vecchio*, the *Mercato Vecchio* and *Porta Santa Maria*.

<sup>183</sup> A.S.F., C.P., 73, f. 49<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 51<sup>r</sup>.

as acts intended to arouse hostility to the regime and encourage dissension within it, and condemned, as they had been since the fourteenth century, for intending to 'disturb the peaceful and tranquil condition' of the *popolo* and commune of Florence.<sup>185</sup> It was on these grounds that the only condemnation was made for words concerning the *status* in the period of 1502 to 1512. As the case of Luigi Manelli makes clear, it was attacks on the motives of leading members of the regime which were particularly likely to have been interpreted in this way, for in the eyes of leading citizens the line between overzealous patriotism and sedition was always thinnest when their motives were questioned.

Manelli's bitter attack in March 1503 was made in a *pratica* concerning taxes.<sup>186</sup> Claiming to be speaking on behalf of those present from his *gonfalone* Manelli was found to have departed from his commission, although some testified to having given him a 'free commission', to speak as he wished.<sup>187</sup> However, the case against him was started because of his words alone, and it was what he said that mattered. What most outraged the author of the notification by which Manelli was eventually condemned was that he had 'publicly and impudently' said that the 'popolo' had been many times 'deceived' and made to starve 'by many and continuing wars and taxes', reducing them to begging for bread so that 'constrained by hunger' they could not see the 'wicked behaviour' of citizens. Those citizens had allowed and even aided Duke Valentino to approach the gates of the city and sack the countryside instead of seizing victory when it was at hand and done all they could to maintain the war and keep the 'popolo' continually hungry and 'oppressed' by taxes.<sup>188</sup>

Manelli's attack was against the leaders of the regime, rather than the regime itself, against the Gonfalonier, Piero Soderini, and 'all the principal citizens', according to Cambi.<sup>189</sup> He had, according to Parenti and Vaglianti, spoken against

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<sup>185</sup> Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, pp. 94, 108, 110: Examples from the 1340s; Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, pp. 108-9.

<sup>186</sup> *Consulte e Pratiche, 1498-1505*, pp. 900-1 (16 March 1503). Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 75 and Idem, *Storia*, pp. 317-8 give a fuller, un-notarised version.

<sup>187</sup> *Consulte e Pratiche, 1498-1505*, pp. 900, 904-7; Parenti, 'Storia', II II 133, ff. 91<sup>r-v</sup>; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 186; Vaglianti, *Storia*, p. 174.

<sup>188</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 105, f. 38<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>189</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 186.

the 'grandi', accused the 'primati' of oppressing the 'popolo' with taxes, and showed the 'outrages long used by the powerful' including how they had had Valentino approach the city in order to 'remove liberty from the *popolo* and burden it with taxes' and to 'put the regime in the hands of the *grandi*'.<sup>190</sup>

Manelli's charge bears a striking resemblance to that made against leading citizens by Ser Giuliano da Ripa in a speech to the Great Council in June 1496, for which he was banished from the city for two years.<sup>191</sup> He too had accused the 'primati', particularly those opposed to Savonarola, of whom he was a supporter, of using 'lies and bestialities' to 'frighten this poor *popolo*' and keep it 'impoverished and burdened with taxes', in order to bend it 'more easily' to their own 'wicked' purposes and 'overthrow the regime'.<sup>192</sup> Manelli's accusation concerning Valentino was also a repeat of popular suspicions in the past. Guicciardini informs us that Valentino's approach to the city in 1501 was judged by the 'popolo' at the time, wrongly he says, to have been arranged by 'principal citizens', particularly Bernardo Rucellai and Piero Soderini, in order to 'overthrow the regime'.<sup>193</sup>

Thus it was the 'primati' and 'especially' the Gonfalonier, according to Parenti, who were determined to have Manelli punished, 'not seeming to them to let this matter pass unavenged, and to discourage others, and to secure themselves in their position'.<sup>194</sup> Cerretani recorded that 'all powerful men' were demanding that Manelli be punished for having wanted to arouse 'popular anger' and for having dared to say such things in the presence of the *Signoria*,<sup>195</sup> and it was at their behest that Manelli was summoned before the *Signoria* to explain his accusations.<sup>196</sup> Examined as to his intent he was found to have prepared his speech,<sup>197</sup> intending to 'make the people afraid, and overthrow the regime'.<sup>198</sup> Manelli was condemned by

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<sup>190</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 133, f. 91<sup>r</sup>; Vaglianti, *Storia*, p. 173.

<sup>191</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, pp. 127, 128.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

<sup>193</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 212-214.

<sup>194</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 133, f. 91<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>195</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 318; *Idem*, *Ricordi*, p. 76.

<sup>196</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 105, f. 24<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>197</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 133, ff. 91<sup>r-v</sup>; Anon., 'Diario storico', f. 84<sup>v</sup>; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 186; Vaglianti, *Storia*, pp. 173-4.

<sup>198</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 187.

the *Quarantia* not for words against the *status* but, as a 'seditious and scandalous man', for having spoken 'diligently, maliciously and thoughtfully', intending to excite 'tumult and scandal' in the 'popolo' and to 'disturb' the 'peaceful condition' of the city.<sup>199</sup> He was banished from the city for ten years and banned from office for life.<sup>200</sup>

However, some questioned whether Manelli had committed a crime against the regime or the 'condition' of the city at all. Manelli himself had begun his speech saying that as a 'free' man born of 'free father' and 'having always lived in liberty' he would speak 'freely'.<sup>201</sup> Cerretani recorded that Manelli was praised by all the 'uomini popolari', men from the common run of political society, saying that he had bravely spoken the 'truth' and was a friend of the 'popolo' and the 'public government' (*vivere publico*),<sup>202</sup> and his treatment was criticized in handbills that accused Soderini of being an enemy of free speech, not wanting anyone to speak 'freely' in favour of the 'popolo' even in *pratiche*.<sup>203</sup> Indeed, Parenti records that support for Manelli amongst the 'popolo', whilst not total, was such that in order to avoid the possibility that the Great Council would absolve him on appeal, it was decided by the *Signoria* and the 'primati' to have the case heard by the *Quarantia* from where it was declared to have no appeal.<sup>204</sup>

Accusations by some leading members of the popular regime in the last republic of the seditious nature and intent behind criticisms of their motives were met by similar defences and denials. In June 1528, as Florentines were about to elect a Gonfalonier for the year, an anonymous printed work concerning the qualities which should be found in the Gonfalonier was distributed throughout the city. The *Sermone sopra l'elezione del Gonfaloniere di Giustizia*, soon after found to be by Pierfilippo

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<sup>199</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 105, f. 38<sup>v</sup> (21 April 1503): 'animo et intentione di fare scandalo, rumore et tumulto nel popolo et con muovere et concitare el popolo a rumore et per turbare el presente pacifico (stato)...per fare scandalo et tumulto nel popolo, et per turbare el presente pacifico et tranquillo stato della città'.

<sup>200</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 105, f. 39<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>201</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 133, f. 91<sup>r</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 75; Idem, *Storia*, p. 317; *Consulte e Pratiche, 1498-1505*, p. 900.

<sup>202</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 76; Idem, *Storia*, pp. 318, 319.

<sup>203</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 133, f. 95<sup>r</sup>; Vaglianti, *Storia*, pp. 175-6.

<sup>204</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 133, ff. 92<sup>r</sup>, 96<sup>v</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 80; Idem, *Storia*, p. 319.

di Alessandro Pandolfini, was a thinly veiled attack against Niccolò Capponi, the sitting Gonfalonier standing for re-election,<sup>205</sup> and was the work of members of the *Adirati*, young *arrabbiati* opponents of the Gonfalonier.<sup>206</sup> It was considered by Capponi's supporters to have been intended to make the *popolo* suspicious of him and promote Messer Baldassare Carducci, the leader of the *Arrabbiati*, Capponi's opponents within the regime.<sup>207</sup> Capponi's supporters may have been most struck by criticism of the Gonfalonier for protecting former supporters of the Medici from the investigations of the Syndics,<sup>208</sup> but the main attack seems to have arisen out of fears that Francesco Guicciardini and others were encouraging Capponi to establish a *stato di ottimati*, dominated by leading citizens, and that Capponi was secretly attempting to accord with the Pope.<sup>209</sup>

The *Sermone* declares its intention to prevent the *popolo* being moved by the 'persuasions' of those who with their 'false goodness' and 'simulated speeches', keep 'concealing and obscuring their intentions', in order to be able to fulfil their 'annual desire' of making a 'stato di pochi', an oligarchical regime.<sup>210</sup> It urges Florentines to choose a Gonfalonier who above all would be vigilant in defending and preserving liberty and the 'popular regime', and argues that the Gonfalonier would have such vigilance only if 'he has never wanted to be honoured by tyrants nor ever held *pratiche* with them concerning the republic'.<sup>211</sup> The Florentine *popolo* are warned not to honour those 'who are unashamed to receive letters from tyrants every day', hold *pratiche* with the enemies of the republic,<sup>212</sup> have failed to restrain the ambition of the 'grandi', and desire to restrict government to the few, for who 'prefers few nobles to the multitude, does not love the popular regime'.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, pp. 169, 174; Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 25, 115.

<sup>206</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 318.

<sup>207</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 65; Idem, 'Vita', p. 318; Pitti, 'Istoria', p. 172.

<sup>208</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, pp. 65-6.

<sup>209</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 318.

<sup>210</sup> P. Pandolfini, 'Sermone sopra l' elezione del Gonfaloniere di Giustizia', B.N.F., Magl., VIII, 18, f. 60<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., ff. 65<sup>v</sup>, 70<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., ff. 71<sup>v</sup>, 74<sup>r</sup>, 78<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., ff. 71<sup>v</sup>, 76<sup>r</sup>, 79<sup>r</sup>.

According to Pitti, Capponi was responsible for a ban against retaining a copy of the *Sermone*, as an attack on the regime.<sup>214</sup> A notification was made against three *adirati* involved in the printing and distribution of the work, Cardinale Rucellai, Piero de' Pazzi and Giovanni Ringadori, describes the *Sermone* as a 'malicious and crooked invention' under cover of an admonitory sermon and accuses them of having had the 'worst and malign intent' to disturb the 'condition of the city' and excite in the 'popolo' an intrigue against it.<sup>215</sup> However, the *Sermone* itself describes its warnings concerning the desires of leading citizens for an oligarchical regime as 'for the popular benefit'. The author declares that 'all that effort, which I make in this cause, I make for the universal benefit, and the health of the republic'.<sup>216</sup> As during the Manelli case it was argued that those who wrote of 'public affairs' in defence of the *popolo* and the popular regime had committed no crime against the 'condition' of the city, but in the popular regime of the last republic that argument met with more success.<sup>217</sup> For the case was rejected by the *Quarantia* as a 'casus status' and sent back to the *Otto*.<sup>218</sup> The *Otto* condemned only one of the three originally accused, Cardinale Rucellai, and only for having left the city and having printed a work (in Siena), both without a licence. Rucellai was banished from the city for three months.<sup>219</sup> Pazzi and Ringadori, as well as the author, Pierfilippo Pandolfini, whom they had named under examination, were released under a surety.<sup>220</sup> There is perhaps no clearer illustration of the extent to which leading citizens had lost that grip on popular government during the last republic which they had held before 1512 than that Pandolfini was released where Manelli had been condemned.

The content of an oration given by Pandolfini to the militia on 29 January 1529, concerning the reasons for the ruin of states, was also seen by many of the 'primati' as an attack on the 'Ottimati', on Capponi and his supporters in the regime, that described 'the suspect ways of who was governing', called them 'tyrannical',

<sup>214</sup> Pitti, 'Istoria', p. 172: 'come cosa allo stato contraria'.

<sup>215</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 202, ff. 73<sup>v</sup>-4<sup>r</sup>: 'animo et intentione perturbandi pacificum statum civitatis Florentie... malitiosam et pravam inventionem... machinationem contra pacificum statum civitatis Florentie'.

<sup>216</sup> Pandolfini, 'Sermone', ff. 60<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>217</sup> Pitti, 'Istoria', p. 171.

<sup>218</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 130, ff. 110<sup>v</sup>, 114<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>219</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 202, ff. 74<sup>r-v</sup> (June 1528).

<sup>220</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 202, f. 61<sup>v</sup>; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 174.



questioned their loyalty to the popular constitution, and blamed the *ottimati* for the overthrow of popular government in 1512.<sup>221</sup> ‘In the popular regime the nobility stir sedition’, Pandolfini had declared, ‘since, judging themselves to be more fine, it does not seem reasonable to them to be equal to the others’.<sup>222</sup> Pandolfini was accused of making a ‘very seditious oration’ that was ‘capable of rousing all the *popolo*’ and having ‘tried to excite tumults and provoke many civil discords’.<sup>223</sup> Following discussion amongst magistracies on whether action should be taken, to which Pandolfini may have been summoned, it was decided not to bring a case against him.<sup>224</sup>

Thus those who publicly accused leading citizens of attempting to oppress the *popolo* and subvert the popular constitution were accused in turn of attempting to arouse a popular revolt and disturb the *status*, the prosperous condition or public welfare of the city, and were then defended on the grounds that those who spoke in favour of the *popolo* and in defence of the popular constitution had committed no crime against the public welfare of the city. The accusations and counter-accusations reveal the uncertainty at the very heart of popular government in Florence. It was not clear what the *status*, the condition, of the city was under popular government, nor who were its guardians. Popular government did not know in whose interests it was to rule. The Medicean regime had no such doubt, and there were more condemnations for verbal offences against the regime as a result.

Exactly how many more is impossible to tell. Crimes that were perceived as against the regime, were not always condemned as against the *status*. The *Otto* was a summary court and the codification of its procedure in 1478 established expressly the possibility of its proceeding in any way it chose ‘summarily and *de facto*’ without explaining the type of crime or the reasons that moved it to a particular sentence.<sup>225</sup> Piero Orlandini’s remark in 1523 that the elevation of Giulio de’ Medici to the Papacy was not legitimate since it had not been made ‘canonically’ and was the

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<sup>221</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, pp. 128-9; Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 70-1; Pitti, ‘Istoria’, pp. 168, 170.

<sup>222</sup> P. Pandolfini, ‘Oratione di Pier Filippo di Alessandro Pandolfini al Popolo di Firenze nel tempio di San Lorenzo, a di xxviii di gennaio MDXXVIII’, ed. G. Canestrini, *A.S.I.*, Ser. 1, xv (1851), p. 365.

<sup>223</sup> Segni, ‘Vita’, p. 326; Idem, *Storie*, i, pp. 128-9.

<sup>224</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 384; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 129.

<sup>225</sup> Antonelli, ‘Magistratura’, p. 26.

result of simony, and Giulio himself was illegitimate, dishonoured the head of the Medicean regime in Florence as Buonguglielmi had done.<sup>226</sup> The *Otto* condemned Orlandini to death, but only records that it was moved to do so by ‘just and reasonable causes’.<sup>227</sup>

To punish individuals for crimes against the *status*, the *Otto* did not even need to condemn them officially to any punishment at all.<sup>228</sup> Chroniclers tell us of the examination, torture and imprisonment by the *Otto* of Fra Spirito, a Franciscan from Santo Spirito who had already been in trouble twice that year, and who cried ‘popolo e libertà’ outside the Palace of the *Signoria* on 21 December 1521.<sup>229</sup> However, he does not appear to have been condemned,<sup>230</sup> and the lack of news concerning his fate was said by some at the time to have been because he died under torture.<sup>231</sup> Those arrested in Florence and Venice in early 1527 for suspicion of conspiracy were clearly found, as we have seen, to have been involved in negotiations with the imperialists to overthrow the regime. Having been examined at length,<sup>232</sup> Carducci remained in Venetian custody,<sup>233</sup> and Giachinotti, Pitti and Pescioni imprisoned, until the overthrow of the Medicean regime in May.<sup>234</sup> Yet they were never condemned and sentenced and the Pope according to one diarist seems to have ensured that no action followed, ‘for love of Filippo Strozzi’ then a hostage of the imperialists in Naples.<sup>235</sup> Although Strozzi did make representations on Pitti’s behalf

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<sup>226</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1108, f. 208<sup>r</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 26 November 1523; *Ibid.*, f. 224<sup>v</sup>: 6 December 1523; Baldovinetti, ‘Memoriale’, f. 180<sup>r</sup>; Anon., ‘Diario, 1521-1532’, f. 8<sup>v</sup>; Anon., ‘Cronica’, f. 149<sup>r</sup>; Rinuccini, *Ricordi storici*, p. clxxxix; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 437; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 251; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 141; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 63.

<sup>227</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 187, f. 69<sup>r</sup> (24 November 1523): ‘iustus et rationabilis causis moti’.

<sup>228</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1107, f. 132<sup>v</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 12 March 1519 records the torture and sentence made by the *Otto* only a few weeks before of one Jacopo Cavalcanti for ‘cose vituperose’ of the Medici. The *partiti* of the *Otto* record no condemnation of Cavalcanti or a crime against the *status* at this time.

<sup>229</sup> Anon., ‘Diario, 1521-1532’, f. 2<sup>r</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 383.

<sup>230</sup> The *partiti* of the *Otto* for the months of January to April 1522 are not extant.

<sup>231</sup> Anon., ‘Diario, 1521-1532’, f. 2<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>232</sup> Baldovinetti, ‘Memoriale’, f. 186<sup>v</sup>; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xliv, col. 85; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 174.

<sup>233</sup> A.S.F., Sig., Minutari, 21, ff. 168<sup>v</sup>-169<sup>r</sup>: Signoria to Alessandro de’ Pazzi, 18 May 1527; A.S.F., Otto di Pratica, Missive, 18, f. 162<sup>v</sup>: Letter to Alessandro de’ Pazzi, 18 May 1527; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, col. 170.

<sup>234</sup> B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 143: Pagolo Benivieni to Bernardo Segni, 2 May 1527; Anon., ‘Cronica’, ff. 153<sup>r-v</sup>; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, pp. 133-4.

<sup>235</sup> Anon., ‘Diario, 1521-1532’, f. 16<sup>r</sup>.

to the Pope, as well as to the authorities in Florence through his brother Lorenzo,<sup>236</sup> Clement's main concern seems to have been not to anger the imperialists into taking reprisals.

The *Otto di Guardia* was not the only magistracy able to sentence individuals summarily without explaining its motives. The *Signoria* had held this power since the early fourteenth century and on occasion it is clear from other sources that it was used to condemn acts against the regime.<sup>237</sup> It did so in the case of Antonio Brucioli in June 1529,<sup>238</sup> because the *Otto* was divided on it.<sup>239</sup> Brucioli had been accused of having written to France that the government of the city was in the hands of 'plebians' (*homini plebei*) and 'ciompi' and that the 'nobles are maltreated and disliked so that if one does not take steps it will last a short time'.<sup>240</sup>

Even the condemnation of open revolt was not always specifically identified as a crime against the *status*. Contemporary accounts tell us of the fines imposed by the *Signoria* on six citizens for their role in the *Tumulto del Venerdì* in April 1527,<sup>241</sup> and Alessandro de' Medici was informed of the particular activities that had singled them out.<sup>242</sup> Maestro Girolamo Buonagrazia and Giovanni Rinuccini had both entered the Palace, and had been particularly involved, even threatening the *Signoria*, in demands to ban the Medici.<sup>243</sup> Ser Giuliano da Ripa had drawn up the provision.<sup>244</sup> Bardo Altoviti had rung the bell calling the *popolo* to arms.<sup>245</sup> These men, and the other two punished, Francesco de' Tanagli and Jacopo Paganelli, were involved in what the *Balia* and the *Signoria* described in provisions as a 'tumult' of 'malicious

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<sup>236</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. III, 108, ff. 104<sup>r</sup>, 105<sup>v</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Lorenzo Strozzi, 16 February and 30 March 1527.

<sup>237</sup> Dorini, *Diritto*, pp. 128-9; Stern, *Criminal Law*, pp. 177-8.

<sup>238</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 131, f. 93<sup>r</sup>; A.S.F., O.G., 205, ff. 33<sup>r-v</sup> (5 June 1529): *Bullettino* of the *Signoria* that they 'hanno trovato contro a lui et considerati e sua demeriti'.

<sup>239</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 422.

<sup>240</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 67, n. 64: Ottaviano Ciaio to Cecchetto Tosinchi, 29 May 1529; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 421.

<sup>241</sup> Nardi, 'Lettera', p. 139.

<sup>242</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXXVI, n. 92: Bernardo de' Medici to Alessandro de' Medici, 2 May 1517.

<sup>243</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 310; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 230; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 215.

<sup>244</sup> Anon., 'Cronica', f. 156<sup>v</sup>; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 309; Nardi, 'Lettera', p. 136; Idem. *Istorie*, ii, p. 133.

<sup>245</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 310.

and violent men who disturbed the present peaceful condition and government'.<sup>246</sup> Yet they were cited to appear before the *Signoria* only on account of alleged tax debts, probably to cover up the violation of an amnesty, and it was for this and other unnamed 'just causes' that they were eventually fined.<sup>247</sup> One more Florentine, the canon Messer Antonio Nerli, was also punished, Alessandro was informed, for having been 'one of the first' who cried 'popolo e libertà' and then rung the bell, but the regime took the unusual step, given the political nature of his crime, of having him detained, as a cleric, by the bishop of Florence, and it was as Cardinal legate of the Pope that Cortona deprived him of his benefices and fined him a thousand *scudi*.<sup>248</sup> Nor was that the only occasion on which the Medicean regime disguised the condemnation of that which it acknowledged to be crimes against the *status*.

In 1517 Camillo Antinori harangued two members of the *Otto*, telling them that 'he was enough to chase them out of the city, and that matters would not always last in this way' and that justice was not being done.<sup>249</sup> Since he had declared that 'one would soon see the end of the regime', Luigi Guicciardini was in no doubt that his crime was 'speaking ill of the regime'.<sup>250</sup> Antinori's words were described by the Medici servant, Goro Gheri, as 'against the regime, the magistracy, and their persons' and it is for this that one would expect Antinori to have been condemned.<sup>251</sup> In fact Antinori was condemned only for insulting the *Otto*,<sup>252</sup> and Gheri's correspondence with Alfonsina de' Medici suggests that the reason for this was that the *Otto* and leading citizens wanted to ensure that Antinori was severely punished.<sup>253</sup> However, Gheri reported, they lacked the determination to punish errors

<sup>246</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 129, f. 70<sup>v</sup>: 'tumulto nella città contro al pacifico stato di quella'; A.S.F., Balie, 44, f. 484<sup>r</sup>: 'maligni et violenti turbatori del presente pacifico stato et reggimento'.

<sup>247</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 129, ff. 68<sup>v</sup>-70<sup>r</sup>, 74<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>248</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXXVI, n. 92: Bernardo de' Medici to Alessandro de' Medici, 2 May 1527; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 310; Pitti, 'Istoria', p. 139.

<sup>249</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, ii, f. 137<sup>v</sup>: Gheri to Alfonsina de' Medici, 7 April 1517.

<sup>250</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, ii, p. 86: Luigi Guicciardini to Francesco Guicciardini, 13 April 1517, 'cominciò a sparlare dello stato ... e dire che presto se ne vedrebbe el fine'.

<sup>251</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, ii, f. 137<sup>v</sup>: Gheri to Alfonsina de' Medici, 7 April 1517, 'contro allo stato, al magistrato e le loro persone'.

<sup>252</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 167, f. 59<sup>r</sup> (11 April 1517): Condemnation for words 'contra honorem decus et dignitatem magistratus et personas dicti domini Octo'. See also *Ibid.*, 230 (Libro di Condanne), f. 201<sup>v</sup>: 'parole inhoneste contro il magistrato delli Otto'.

<sup>253</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, ii, f. 137<sup>v</sup>: Gheri to Alfonsina de' Medici, 7 April 1517.

against the regime because they were finding that such condemnations were later revoked on the instructions of the Medici. They grieved that absolving people in this way only gave encouragement to opponents of the regime.<sup>254</sup>

Following the election of Giovanni de' Medici to the Papacy in March 1513, Martino Scarfi and Alessandro Manetti, condemned for verbal offences, and Niccolò Valori and Giovanni Folchi, involved in the Boscoli-Capponi plot, were released from the sentences imposed on them only weeks before,<sup>255</sup> and later absolved by the *Balia*.<sup>256</sup> Gheri may have been referring to this, or more probably to cases such as that of Francesco del Pugliese, who with Alfonsina's support,<sup>257</sup> was absolved of his crime by the *Balia* in 1515 only two years into his ten year sentence.<sup>258</sup> In effect the *Otto* did not condemn Antinori for words against the *status* but for the insult to the *Otto*, in order to punish him for the words against the regime, and it would seem that similar reasons had led two years previously to the ordinary condemnation of Niccolò Paganelli,<sup>259</sup> for his insulting remarks to a tax official.<sup>260</sup> Those who condemned Antinori to be banished from the city for five years must then have been sorely disappointed when only six months later he himself was absolved by the Seventeen Reformers of the *Monte*,<sup>261</sup> followed within weeks by the absolution of Larione Buongugliemi,<sup>262</sup> who had been banished from the city for life in 1515.<sup>263</sup>

During the last republic, the *Quarantia* was supposed to accept and judge all cases concerning the *status*, but is clear that not all such cases were heard there. Busini tells us that the *Otto* could consider cases not to be of the *status* in order to judge them itself, preferring to send cases to the *Quarantia* only if the error was great or had aroused popular anger,<sup>264</sup> and the *Otto* that sat in the autumn of 1529 certainly

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<sup>254</sup> Ibid., ff. 137<sup>v</sup>-8<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>255</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 155, f. 50<sup>r</sup> (12 March 1513).

<sup>256</sup> A.S.F., Balie, 42, ff. 136<sup>r</sup><sup>v</sup> (4 April 1513).

<sup>257</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXIV, f. 57<sup>r</sup>: Alfonsina de' Medici to Lorenzo de' Medici, 16 February 1515.

<sup>258</sup> A.S.F., Balie, 43, f. 198<sup>r</sup> (7 December 1515).

<sup>259</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 162, f. 29<sup>r</sup> (10 July 1515): Condemnation for certain 'errores' to be banished from the city for four years.

<sup>260</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 118<sup>r</sup>: "non ci andrebbe un mese che ci si ghovernerebbe altrimenti".

<sup>261</sup> A.S.F., Balie, 40, f. 176<sup>v</sup> (October 1517).

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., f. 180<sup>r</sup> (November 1517).

<sup>263</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 163, f. 63<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>264</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 144-5; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 192.

seems to have followed such a policy.<sup>265</sup> These same grounds may have been behind the occasional rejection by the *Quarantia* as *casus status* of cases that clearly, and in the eyes of the *Otto*, concerned the *status*. Fra Bonaventura's declaration in March 1529 that 'if the Pope were not wicked he would be prefect of Florence' and that 'the present regime could not last', questioned the permanence of the regime, and thus was sent by the *Otto* to the *Quarantia* as a 'casus status'.<sup>266</sup> A year earlier the *Otto* had been equally convinced of the nature of the assertions of one Fra Lodovico de' Guglielmi that the lanznechts were coming to put the Medici back in control of Florence. In agreement with the author of the notification against the friar, who described the words as against the 'present liberty', the *Otto* sent the case to the *Quarantia* as a 'casus status'.<sup>267</sup> However, both cases were rejected by the *Quarantia* on the grounds that neither was a 'casus status',<sup>268</sup> and the friars were both condemned by the *Otto* which, unable to describe their words as against the *status*, did not describe them at all.<sup>269</sup> It is difficult to see in either of these cases how the *Quarantia* could have been moved by legal considerations to take its view, but what else moved it is far from clear.

Popular and Medicean regimes were in basic agreement about what constituted an offence against the state. Those who declared that the regime should be overthrown or who questioned its legitimacy, rejecting its right to govern and praising the past regime, or who predicted the present regime's imminent demise, were deemed by both popular and Medicean governments to have spoken against the regime and condemned for crimes against the *status*, the condition of the city. The meaning of 'speaking against the regime' remained the same throughout the period. The main difference between the regimes was that only in the periods of popular

<sup>265</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 206, ff. 25<sup>v</sup>-67<sup>v</sup> (September to December 1529): A number of condemnations for joining or otherwise aiding enemy forces, occasionally described as acts against the 'Republic', as well as others for pronouncements or letters 'resulting in the dishonour of the Florentine Republic', all made without recourse to the *Quarantia*.

<sup>266</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 131, ff. 67<sup>r-v</sup>; A.S.F., O.G., 205, f. 6<sup>r</sup>: 'si Pontifex non se male habuisset, illum prefectum fuisse Florentie et quod presentis status durare non posset'.

<sup>267</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 130, f. 142<sup>r</sup> (July 1528); A.S.F., O.G., 202, ff. 120<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>268</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 130, f. 145<sup>v</sup>; Ibid., 131, f. 72<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>269</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 202, f. 120<sup>v</sup> (2 August 1528): Condemnation of Fra Lodovico to be banished from the city for two years; Ibid., 205, f. 6<sup>r</sup> (7 May 1529): Condemnation of Fra Bonaventura to be imprisoned in the Stinche for one year.

government do we find the accusation and condemnation of words not as against the *status*, but intended to 'disturb' it.

It was a significant difference, and the debate surrounding such cases reflected the deeper uncertainty at the heart of popular government. It was never as clear under popular government as it was in the Medicean regime who were the guardians of the *status civitatis*, the condition of the city. This was one reason why there were more proportionately far condemnations of verbal offences against the regime in the Medicean era, as we shall see, than in the years of popular government. Yet to explain the pattern of condemnations throughout the period we need to look further than definitions of political crime to the willingness and ability of regimes to condemn those who spoke out against them.

## The Punishment of Political Crime

In the decade from Piero Soderini's election to the new office of Gonfalonier for life in 1502 until his forceful expulsion from the Palace in 1512 only one individual was condemned for speaking against the regime. By contrast, as Table One below shows, after the Medici returned to Florence in 1512 the next fifteen months alone saw twenty-one individuals condemned for verbal offences against the regime, and by the time the Medici were expelled from the city in 1527 a total of forty individuals had been condemned for speaking out against them. In the three years of the restored popular government of the last republic nine individuals were condemned for speaking against the regime.

It is not possible to give a completely accurate account of the numbers condemned throughout the period from 1502 to 1530 for verbal offences against the regime not least because there are a few small gaps in the surviving archive records of the Florentine magistracies concerned with criminal justice in the city.<sup>1</sup> More significantly however, the records themselves do not always reveal, as we have seen, the nature of the crime for which an individual was condemned, and on occasion even disguised it. Nevertheless, it is clear that there was an enormous difference not only between the rates at which popular and Medicean governments condemned people for verbal offences against the regime, but also between those of the two popular governments of 1502 to 1512 and 1527 to 1530.

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<sup>1</sup> The records of the decisions and deliberations (*partiti e deliberazioni*) of the *Otto di Guardia* for the period of 1502 to 1530 are not extant for the following months: Sept. to Dec. 1508, May to Aug. 1510, Jan. to Apr. 1522, May to Aug. 1523, Jan. to Apr. 1525, May to Aug. 1527, Jan. to Apr. 1528, Jan. to Aug. 1530. The records of the *Quarantia*, contained in the deliberations of the *Signoria* and the Colleges, are extant throughout the periods of popular government when the court was in existence.



Table One

Numbers of individuals condemned for verbal attacks against the regime from 1502 to 1530.

Popular regime November 1502 to August 1512		Medicean regime September 1512 to 16 May 1527		Popular regime of last republic 17 May 1527 to August 1530	
Year	Numbers of Condemned	Year	Numbers of Condemned	Year	Numbers of Condemned
1503	1	1512	3	1527	1
		1513	18	1528	4
		1514	5	1529	3
		1515	2	1530	1
		1517	2		
		1518	2		
		1519	1		
		1521	1		
		1522	1		
		1523	4		
		1526	1		
Total	1		40		9

Sources: A.S.F., O.G., 125 to 206; A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 105 to 114 and 129 to 133.

The pattern of condemnations for verbal offences was irregular across regimes, but it is the lack of condemnations during the popular regime while Soderini was Gonfalonier that stands out most. For as Table One shows, both the Medicean regime and the popular regime of the last republic condemned an average of about three individuals a year. The similarity between the two regimes is of particular note, given the reputation of the popular regime of the last republic for extreme ruthlessness in its pursuit and punishment of political crime, including verbal offences.<sup>2</sup> In fact, in its three short years the last republic condemned three times fewer individuals for verbal offences than had the Medici in the first three years after their return to the city in 1512, and half as many individuals as were condemned by the Medici in 1513 alone.

<sup>2</sup> A. Rossi, *Francesco Guicciardini e il governo fiorentino dal 1527 al 1540*, i (Bologna, 1896), pp. 160-4; Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 65-7, 99, 134-5, 206, 241; Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 230, 235, 240, 249; Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, p. 357.

No equivalent study has yet been made of the Medicean regime before 1494 or of the years of the popular regime from 1494 to 1502 but there were, for example, no condemnations by the *Otto di Guardia* for words against the *status* in the years from 1489 to 1494.<sup>3</sup> The period of eight years from 1504 to 1512, when there were also no condemnations for a speaking against the 'condition' of the city, was thus not a wholly exceptional one, even in terms of the city's recent past. There were condemnations for verbal offences in both the Laurentian era and after 1494,<sup>4</sup> but one can speculate that the rate at which both the Medicean regime after 1512 and the popular regime of the last republic condemned individuals for speaking against the regime was not only high compared to the popular regime under Soderini, but also, though less remarkably so, compared to the Laurentian regime and the popular regime from 1494 until 1502.

Strikingly, the pattern of condemnations was not only uneven across regimes, it was also irregular within them. The Medicean regime for example, condemned nearly as many individuals in 1513 alone, as in all the other fourteen years of its duration put together. Over three-quarters of those condemned under the Medicean regime were condemned in the first seven years after the Medici returned to the city, and there were no condemnations at all in 1516, 1520, 1524, 1525 and 1527.

Such large shifts in the rate of condemnations, both between and within regimes, might reflect shifting patterns in open and public verbal attacks, or in the willingness or ability of regimes to condemn such attacks. Certainly all these factors can be found at work. There was no continual flow of open and public detraction of any regime, although some historians seem to have assumed one.<sup>5</sup> No regime always sought ruthlessly to condemn those who spoke out against it. Indeed the lenient treatment of verbal offences needs to be seen as part of a more general use of clemency by regimes and with which they could prefer or were compelled to deal with those suspected, or found to have committed acts against them, even conspiracy and revolt.

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<sup>3</sup> Based on an analysis of A.S.F., O.G., 81 to 98.

<sup>4</sup> See for example A.S.F., O.G., 108, f. 177<sup>r</sup> (9 December 1497): Condemnation for 'verba in dedecus et infamiam presentis pacifici et tranquillii status communis Florentie'.

<sup>5</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, p. 230.

Francesco Valori, for example, ensured that no action was taken against Lucrezia Salviati for her part in the plot of 1497 partly out of friendship for her husband, according to Guicciardini, and partly because it seemed to him an 'ugly matter' to proceed against a woman.<sup>6</sup> To quieten the 'rumours' stirred up 'in vendetta' by the friends and relatives of those who were condemned it was decided not to proceed against any more citizens.<sup>7</sup> Cosimo de' Pazzi was not condemned for his involvement in the plot of 1513 partly because he was a close relative of the Medici, according to Cerretani, and partly because the plot 'had not taken root'.<sup>8</sup> The leaders of the *Tumulto del Venerdì* in 1527 were not punished because the regime feared the potential opposition of the Duke of Urbino to any break in the amnesty he had guaranteed,<sup>9</sup> and the consequences of doing so while there remained an imperialist threat to the city.<sup>10</sup> Contrary to the assumptions of historians of criminal justice in Florence, regimes did not always engage in the harsh and resolute repression of those who committed acts against them.<sup>11</sup> On occasion regimes preferred to be lenient. On occasion leniency was forced upon them.

In so far as historians have looked at all at the punishment of verbal offences in Florence, apart from assumptions concerning the extreme ruthlessness of the last republic, no attempt has been made to examine or compare the willingness and ability of particular regimes to condemn those who spoke out against them.<sup>12</sup> Yet there were some significant differences, and surprising similarities between the regimes. When Soderini was Gonfalonier a more lenient attitude towards verbal offences prevailed than it ever did in the Medicean regime or the popular regime of the last republic. That was often the result rather of the weakness of the regime and

<sup>6</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 145.

<sup>7</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, pp. 212-3; Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 134.

<sup>8</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 303.

<sup>9</sup> B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 142: Paolo Benivieni to Bernardo Segni, 29 April 1527; Carneseccchi, 'Assedio', p. 448.

<sup>10</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXXVI, n. 80: Fabrizio Peregrino to Alessandro de' Medici, 26 April 1527; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 123.

<sup>11</sup> J. Brackett, *Criminal Justice and Crime in Late Renaissance Florence, 1537-1609* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 115; Zorzi, 'Aspetti', pp. 549, 551-3; Idem, 'The Judicial System in Florence in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth centuries', *Crime, Society and the Law in Renaissance Italy*, ed. T. Dean and K. J. P. Lowe (Cambridge 1994), p. 55; Becker, 'Changing patterns', pp. 281-2.

<sup>12</sup> Some remarks concerning specific cases only can be found in Butters, *Governors*, pp. 54, 62, 222; Stephens, *Fall*, p. 165.

its inability to proceed against those who engaged in verbal attacks, than of a natural preference for leniency. Divisions within the regime obstructed action against verbal attacks, and gave shelter to those who spoke out against the regime. Unable to deal resolutely with verbal offences, the popular regime before 1512 was for the same reasons equally unable to take action against those consorting with the Medici, even those suspected of intriguing with them. These weaknesses were to have serious and significant consequences for they encouraged and enabled opponents of the regime in 1497 and 1512 to conspire against it, and thus were one reason for the overthrow of the regime in 1512.

By contrast there was a greater willingness and ability in both the Medicean regime and the popular government of the last republic to condemn verbal offences. Both sought, for the same reasons, to be more ruthless towards those who spoke out against them than Soderini had been, although it was for quite separate reasons that they both succeeded. The last republic was no more extreme than the Medici in the regularity with which it condemned verbal offences, but during the siege it was more severe in its punishment of them. Whatever their preference for ruthlessness however, both regimes could still find themselves incapable of resolute action against those suspected of intriguing against them, with consequences just as serious as they had been for the popular regime in 1497 and 1512. The Medici regime split apart in the winter of 1526 and, as before 1512, those desiring to overthrow the regime were able to exploit the gap. That was ultimately to result in the revolt of April 1527 known as the *Tumulto del Venerdì*.

The very important relationship between conspiracies against the regime, and the degree of resolution with which it dealt with those suspected or found to have committed crimes against it has not been recognized before.<sup>13</sup> Yet that conspiracies against the popular regime, and in particular that by which it was overthrown in 1512, were encouraged, and made easier by the failure of the regime to deal ruthlessly with its enemies was the judgement of most contemporaries including both Machiavelli and Guicciardini. Florence knew to its cost, Antonio Brucioli wrote lamentedly

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<sup>13</sup> The matter is referred to briefly in relation to the overthrow of Soderini in Pesman Cooper, 'Caduta', p. 256.

in 1526, 'what it was not to punish the violators of liberty'.<sup>14</sup> Indeed that the popular regime had been overthrown in 1512 on account of its lack of resolution, and that of Soderini in particular, in dealing with verbal offences and those suspected of intriguing against the regime, was an argument frequently used by members of both the Medicean government and the popular government of the last republic, as we shall see, to justify calls for the harsh repression of acts against the regime. The desire to avoid the mistakes of Soderini was thus one reason for the more ruthless attitude after 1512 towards verbal offences of both the Medicean regime and the last republic. If the Medici were more ruthless after 1512 than they had been in the fifteenth century, this was why.

However, to understand fully the attitudes of regimes towards verbal offences, it is necessary to understand a little more about the offences themselves, about the public nature of such crimes, and the purposes that lay behind them. Those condemned for speaking against the regime had usually been denounced to the authorities by private individuals, often in formal notifications to the *Otto*.<sup>15</sup> As happened to del Pugliese, their words could be reported by someone, in this case a soldier, who had overheard them.<sup>16</sup> Often however, as in the case of Piero Orlandini, it was the very people with whom the condemned had been speaking who informed the authorities.<sup>17</sup> Both Cocchi and Ficini were 'discussing with one other', as Segni put it.<sup>18</sup> Their words were spoken to and in the presence of only one other person, who then informed on them.<sup>19</sup> Where those condemned for words against the regime had been reported by communal officials or magistrates this was because, as with Andrea Rinuccini and Francesco Carcherelli,<sup>20</sup> or Camillo Antinori,<sup>21</sup> their words were spoken to or in presence of those officials who reported them.

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<sup>14</sup> Brucioli, *Dialogi*, p. 306.

<sup>15</sup> For example, the cases against both Larione Buongugliemi in 1515 and Giovanni Buoncompagnio in 1517 originated with formal notifications to the *Otto*. A.S.F., O.G., 163, f. 55<sup>f</sup>; *Ibid.*, 167, f. 62<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 28.

<sup>17</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 437; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 251.

<sup>18</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, pp. 213, 266.

<sup>19</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 65, n. 48: Gianbattista Tosinghi to Cechotto Tosinghi, 12 October 1529; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 36; Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 138.

<sup>20</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, iv, ff. 270<sup>v</sup>-1<sup>r</sup>: Gheri to Lorenzo de' Medici, 6 August 1518.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, f. 152<sup>f</sup>: Gheri to Ser Bernardo Fiamminghi, 12 April 1517.

There were a few exceptions to this. One was the condemnation of Pandolfo Biliotti, Duccio Adimari and three others in the aftermath of the plot of 1513.<sup>22</sup> They were arrested and examined in connection with the conspiracy,<sup>23</sup> probably because their names appeared on a list drawn up by the plot's two leaders, Boscoli and Capponi, of those whom they believed would support the plot.<sup>24</sup> However, Biliotti and the others were found to have had no knowledge of the conspiracy.<sup>25</sup> While Biliotti denied that Boscoli or Capponi had told him anything of the plot, he did confess to having had conversations with Boscoli concerning their preference for the popular regime and mutual dislike of the 'present government', and with Capponi concerning internal and external affairs.<sup>26</sup>

Biliotti and the others had spoken against the regime with those who then conspired against it and that is why they were condemned. Indeed they seem to have been considered to have unconsciously encouraged the plot, and thus Giuliano de' Medici reported that whilst they had had no knowledge of the conspiracy they were punished for 'having some participation'.<sup>27</sup> Others examined on the list who were 'not at fault', as Giuliano put it, including Piero Orlandini, Lodovico de' Nobili and Daniello Strozzi, were released, in return for sureties of between one and three thousand florins.<sup>28</sup> Biliotti and the others were banished from the city for terms of three and four years, but within days were released from their sentences, on the election of Cardinal Giovanni to the Papacy, and absolved by the *Balia*.<sup>29</sup>

Biliotti and the others were opponents of the Medici grumbling of the regime amongst themselves, and thus if it had not been for the conspiracy it is unlikely that

<sup>22</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 155, f. 39<sup>r</sup> (26 February): Condemnation of Ubertino Boncianni and Francesco Serragli 'pro conservatione presentis optimi pacifici status et regiminis populi Florentini'; *Ibid.*, f. 42<sup>r</sup> (1 March): Condemnation of Pandolfo Biliotti and Duccio Adimari 'pro conservatione presentis optimi pacifici status et regiminis populi Florentini'; *Ibid.*, f. 45<sup>r</sup> (5 March): Condemnation of Giovanni di Ser Antonio Bartolomei for 'just and reasonable causes'.

<sup>23</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 159<sup>v</sup>; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xv, col. 574: Giuliano de' Medici to Piero da Bibbiena, 19 February 1513; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 5; Vaglianti, *Storia*, p. 237.

<sup>24</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xvi, coll. 25-6: Giuliano de' Medici to Piero da Bibbiena, 7 March 1513. Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 299, gives Adimari, Bartolomei, and Biliotti as having been on the list.

<sup>25</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 18<sup>r</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 299; *Idem*, *Dialogo*, pp. 75-6; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 5; Vettori, 'Sommario', p. 295; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 123.

<sup>26</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., XCVII, n. 269: Examination of Pandolfo Biliotti (25 February 1513).

<sup>27</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xvi, col. 26: Giuliano de' Medici to Piero da Bibbiena, 7 March 1513.

<sup>28</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 155, ff. 39<sup>v</sup>-40<sup>r</sup> (26 February): Andrea Marsuppini was also one of their number.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 50<sup>r</sup> (12 March); A.S.F., *Balie*, 43, ff. 136<sup>r-v</sup> (4 April).

they would have come to the attention of the *Otto*. Bartolomeo Redditi's conversations concerning Savonarola had also only come to light because the others involved, two friars, were then examined after preaching against the regime. As were the friars, almost all those condemned for speaking against the regime, were condemned because they had spoken where they could be overheard or with those who might inform on them. They had spoken not with friends but with strangers, not at home but in *piazze*, churches and shops, not in private but in public.

This difference between private and public criticism of the regime was recognized by contemporaries. Notifications accused individuals of 'publicly' speaking ill of the regime.<sup>30</sup> Diarists and chroniclers refer to occasions when criticism of the regime by 'citizens' was made 'secretly', such as in March 1503 and March 1515,<sup>31</sup> or in their villas as in August 1523.<sup>32</sup> They refer also to times when such criticism was made 'openly' and 'publicly', such as in May 1505, December 1507 and in the days before the peaceful overthrow of the Medici in May 1527,<sup>33</sup> and on a number of occasions during the last republic.<sup>34</sup> No one seems to have been condemned in connection with any of these instances of outspokenness, and so while it is clear that open and public detraction of the regime was never continuous, it is equally clear that the pattern of condemnations for verbal offences bears little reflection of the pattern of public criticism as recorded by the chroniclers.

While those condemned for verbal offences had spoken openly against the regime, their purposes in doing so are often difficult to discern. Certainly it cannot be assumed, as it has been, that those condemned for verbal attacks were engaged in any deliberate form of 'open rebellion' or challenge to the power of the regime.<sup>35</sup> If there were instances of attempts to arouse hostility to the regime or even hostile acts against it, there were as many cases, if not more, that were the result of carelessness, even thoughtlessness. One reason for the lack of condemnations during the

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<sup>30</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 201 (Libro di Notificazioni), f. 92<sup>v</sup> (March 1528).

<sup>31</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 133, f. 88<sup>v</sup> (March 1503); *Ibid.*, II IV 171, f. 114<sup>r</sup> (March 1515).

<sup>32</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 431.

<sup>33</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, f. 59<sup>v</sup> (May 1505); Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 156 (December 1507); L. Guicciardini, 'Sacco', p. 212 (May 1527).

<sup>34</sup> Segni, 'Vita', p. 312 (1527); Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 169 (May 1528); Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 207 (September 1527); *Ibid.*, ii, p. 10 (July 1529).

<sup>35</sup> Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, pp. 259-60, 321; *Idem*, 'Medici', pp. 142-3.

Republican regime of 1502 to 1512 may well have lain in what may best be described as the less nervous attitude of the regime under Soderini to such outbursts.

There are a very few clear cases where those condemned do seem to have been attempting to arouse hostility to the regime and even hostile acts against it amongst the *popolo*. Fra Spirito was reported to have told his examiners that he had cried 'popolo e libertà' in the Piazza in 1521 because he 'wanted to be king and tyrant as the Cardinal and wicked as those who examined him' and he 'wanted to see whether the *popolo* would help him as it helped them'.<sup>36</sup> Luigi Manelli was found to have been wanting to arouse popular anger against leading citizens, and while the purposes of those who publicly questioned the motives of leaders of the regime was always a matter of dispute, even to his supporters it was evident that his speech had been made, as Vaglienti put it, to please the 'popolo' and in the belief that he would have its 'favour'.<sup>37</sup>

Manelli was condemned for intending to arouse the *popolo* and to disturb the *status*. All the others condemned however, were condemned for their words alone and not the purposes for which they may have been intended. This was no doubt because, unlike Manelli, they were found to have spoken directly against the regime which was enough on its own to condemn them. Yet it is possible that they were attempting to arouse and incite hostility against the regime. Certainly the condemnation of Giovanbattista Petrucci tells us that his words had been spoken 'in the presence of many and various men and persons standing by and hearing',<sup>38</sup> while those of Francesco Marchi, Francesco Torrigiani and Fra Bonaventura emphasize that the words were said in 'more and different places and times'.<sup>39</sup> Three Augustinian friars from Santo Spirito<sup>40</sup> were banished from the city for three years in October 1512 for words spoken 'in the presence of other persons' and over a period

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<sup>36</sup> Anon., 'Diario, 1521-1532', f. 2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> Vaglienti, *Storia*, p. 174.

<sup>38</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 157, f. 37<sup>r</sup> (October 1513): 'coram pluribus et multis hominibus et personis astantibus et audientibus'.

<sup>39</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 155, f. 63<sup>r</sup> (April 1513): 'in pluribus et diversis locis et temporibus'; Ibid., 187, f. 42<sup>r</sup> (October 1523); Ibid., 205, f. 6<sup>r</sup> (May 1529).

<sup>40</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi., Ser. I, 360, f. 34<sup>r</sup>: Pandolfo de' Conti to Francesco Guicciardini, 13 November 1512.



of some weeks.<sup>41</sup> One Simone di Gabriello was fined in April 1526 for words described as spoken in various places and in the presence of many people,<sup>42</sup> as were those of Larione Buonguglielmi, whose crimes were described as ‘malicious’, over a decade before.<sup>43</sup> The prophesy of Giusto della Badessa and the friars in 1513 was no doubt made before gatherings large or small, although since they were condemned ‘for the conservation’ of the *status* the record does not specify this.

Such evidence is suggestive but inconclusive. And if any of these individuals were hoping to arouse hostility to the regime and even hostile acts against it, in the cases of most of those condemned there is nothing to suggest that their offences amounted to anything more than the simple public expression of hostility to the regime. There is no evidence for example, to support the recent assertion that Bartolomeo Pandolfini and Francesco del Pugliese were ‘agitating against the regime’.<sup>44</sup> Galeotto de’ Medici wondered if Pandolfini had ‘done it in order to speak much of similar matters’, but as he informed Lorenzo, Pandolfini confessed ‘that he said it to no other effect than to talk a lot’, pointing to a crime of idle chatter.<sup>45</sup>

Florentines, as we have seen, distinguished between those who spoke ‘through wickedness’ and those ‘given to chattering’; the ‘*populus iniquus*’ and the ‘*populus murmurans*’ or ‘*dolens*’ once referred to by Savonarola.<sup>46</sup> While both ‘grumble and complain about the regime’, the ‘*populus iniquus*’ keep ‘inciting those turned to the public good, continually trying to turn them round and to harm the public good’, and were responsible for handbills (*polizze*).<sup>47</sup> Distributed in churches and squares, handbills were not uncommon within our period, particularly when

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<sup>41</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 154, f. 82<sup>r</sup> (13 October 1512): Condemnation for words spoken ‘*coram aliis personis ... in dedecus et vilipendium presentis pacifici status et dicti domini Otto*’. Magister Jacopo was exiled to San Castello di Montefalcho, Fra Simone to Genoa, Fra Piero to Padua.

<sup>42</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 194, f. 93<sup>r</sup> (27 April 1526): Condemnation for ‘*mala vita et moribus maloque animo contra presentem pacificum et tranquillum statum ... verba contumeliosa ignominiosa et inhonesta in dedecus et vilipendium presentis pacifici status et ... maxime civitatis Florentie et civium dicte civitatis*’.

<sup>43</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 163, f. 56<sup>v</sup> (December 1515). See also Parenti, ‘Storia’, II IV 171, f. 124<sup>r</sup>: ‘disse queste parole al urchio’.

<sup>44</sup> Polizzotto, ‘Medici’, p. 144.

<sup>45</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXVI, n. 627: Galeotto de’ Medici to Lorenzo de’ Medici, 28 December 1514.

<sup>46</sup> G. Savonarola, *Prediche sopra Amos e Zaccaria*, ed. P. Ghighieri, i (Rome, 1971), p. 152.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

Soderini was Gonfalonier, although no one was ever condemned for them.<sup>48</sup> On occasion they were clearly intended to encourage hostility to the regime. In February 1505 handbills were found throughout the city urging the 'popolo' not to vote for taxes for thus it would be free of the Gonfalonier, the Cardinal his brother, and the French alliance and 'you will recover your liberty'.<sup>49</sup> Parenti thought that these words came from those citizens 'discontented of being deprived of the supreme dignity, and not being raised to that outstanding grade above the others as they desired'.<sup>50</sup>

'Idlers and chatterers' (*cicale*) were described by Niccolò Martelli and carnival songs of the period as those 'old men' who spent all their time at the so-called 'Tornaquinci corner' or on the benches around Santa Trinità and the palace of the *Ufficiali dei Pupilli*, 'discussing maliciously and speaking ill of all the passers-by'.<sup>51</sup> When either the weather or 'bad times' meant that everyone stayed indoors and no one passed they would be 'forced' to speak ill of the regime, and particularly of 'the fantasy and the design' of the regime and of those things which the regime 'has in fantasy of doing'.<sup>52</sup> 'They are so accustomed and loosened-up in their ill-speaking', Martelli wrote, 'that it seems to them sooner to offend when they speak well, than when they speak ill'.<sup>53</sup> To have 'chattered (*cicalato*) foolishly as he does' was how Pandolfini's crime was described by Francesco Guicciardini, a member of the *Otto* that condemned him.<sup>54</sup> Ficini too was described by one contemporary as having 'chattered' against the regime.<sup>55</sup> Savonarola also spoke of the 'populus inutilis': the 'foolish men who complain and do not know what they are saying'.<sup>56</sup> Piero di Bartolo, condemned for 'speaking ill of regime' in 1513,<sup>57</sup> and banished

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<sup>48</sup> See for example, Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, f. 3<sup>v</sup> (March 1504).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 45<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 45<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> N. Martelli, 'Discorso', ed. C. Guasti, 'Documenti', p. 217; 'Canzone delle pancaccie', *Trionfi e canti carnascialeschi toscani del rinascimento*, ed. R. Brusciagli, i (Rome 1986), pp. 185-9. See also Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 87.

<sup>52</sup> Martelli, 'Discorso', ed. Guasti, 'Documenti', pp. 217-8.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218.

<sup>54</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, i, p. 232: Francesco to Luigi Guicciardini, 3 January 1515.

<sup>55</sup> B.N.F., Magl., XXV, 555, f. 210<sup>r</sup>: 'Da un libro di Giovambatista Betti'.

<sup>56</sup> Savonarola, *Amos e Zaccaria*, i, p. 152.

<sup>57</sup> Landucci, *Diario*, p. 334: 'dissono che gli aveva isparlato dello stato'.

from the city for six years,<sup>58</sup> seems to have been one of these. Landucci records him to have been a macebearer and describes him as a ‘simple man’ who often spoke thoughtlessly, ‘characterizing the citizens, without thinking any harm’.<sup>59</sup>

So some open verbal attacks against the regime were clearly not a premeditated or deliberate attempt to arouse or encourage hostility to the regime. Often indeed, they amounted only to the careless remarks of men made in the midst of a non-political argument. Moreover, in such cases it is clear that the nature of insult made to the regime was directed by the nature of the argument in which it appeared. In December 1522 Francesco Tosinchi was condemned for words in dishonour of the ‘status’, having said that ‘Florence does not render justice’. His assertion was made to a woman who, rejecting his extremely threatening sexual advances, had told him she would have recourse to Florentine justice.<sup>60</sup> Girolamo degli Albizzi’s snobbish ‘chattering’ about the regime, as the *Quarantia* described it,<sup>61</sup> was directed at a pressing creditor whom he obviously considered to be socially inferior.<sup>62</sup> Orlandini’s denial of the legitimacy of Cardinal Giulio’s elevation to the papacy was made to the man to whom he had lost a bet on whether Giulio would be elected.<sup>63</sup> He was apparently heard by many bystanders in the Piazza and Orlandini may even have begun to address them to find support for his argument, but it was the argument and not the crowd that mattered.<sup>64</sup> Thus Cambi considered that he had been moved ‘either by passion of money lost, or by rashness, or by not wanting to pay up’.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 155, f. 15<sup>r</sup> (22 January 1513): Condemnation ‘pro conservatione presentis pacificis optimi status et regiminis populi Florentini’.

<sup>59</sup> Landucci, *Diario*, p. 334.

<sup>60</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 184, f. 83<sup>v</sup>: ‘‘Florentia non reddit ius’ in verecundiamque vilipendium presentis pacifici status’. Her words are recorded as ‘io mene andrò alla ragione di Firenze’.

<sup>61</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 130, f. 85<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 201 (Libro di Notificazioni), f. 131<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>63</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1108, f. 208<sup>r</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 26 November 1523; *Ibid.*, f. 224<sup>v</sup>: 6 December 1523; Anon., ‘Diario, 1521-1532’, f. 8<sup>v</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 437; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 251; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 141; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 63.

<sup>64</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1108, f. 208<sup>r</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 26 November 1523; *Ibid.*, f. 224<sup>v</sup>: 6 December 1523; Baldovinetti, ‘Memoriale’, f. 180<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 250.

In many cases, such as Antinori's 'chattering' as Luigi Guicciardini described it, the argument was with communal officials or their servants,<sup>66</sup> and was the result of an individual being 'pushed by passion', as Benedetto Buondelmonti explained to the *Otto* of his own outburst against servants of the Syndics in 1527.<sup>67</sup> All accounts of the case of Jacopo Alamanni, for example, concur with that in his condemnation that he had called on the *popolo* and Palace guard to help him whilst he was being chased, arrested, and led to prison by servants of the *Otto* following his assault on a fellow citizen.<sup>68</sup> Verbal attacks directed at communal officials and members of the magistracies were often the result of confrontations produced by the wider political conflict, as we shall see, but the attacks themselves, as were many others, were usually made to no other purpose than the relief of the frustration and anger of those who made them.

Thus while some of those condemned may have been attempting to arouse popular hostility to the regime, perhaps with the intention, however vague and however distant, that popular activity against the regime would result, only Fra Spirito could be said to have made any direct attempt to arouse a popular revolt. The offences of probably most of those condemned however, were the result of carelessness even thoughtlessness. One reason for the relative lack of condemnations during the popular regime before 1512 may be because there was less concern to condemn careless outbursts and idle chatter that did not intend to arouse hostility to the regime. Thus Manelli was pursued with vigour and Soderini endeavoured to have the authors of *polizze* punished. In 1503 handbills were found in churches and *piazze* in 'shame and blame' of the Gonfalonier, calling him a tyrant and saying other 'harmful and spiteful' things. Others reproached him for having his wife move in to the Palace and take over a room there belonging to the *Dieci*. Parenti says that

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<sup>66</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, ii, p. 86: Luigi to Francesco Guicciardini, 13 April 1517.

<sup>67</sup> B.N.F., F.P. II III 433, f. 83<sup>v</sup>: 'Raguaglio del caso di Benedetto Buondelmonti per Messer Filippo suo figliuolo'.

<sup>68</sup> B.N.F., F.P., II III 433, f. 80<sup>r</sup>: 'Raguaglio del caso di Jacopo Alamanni per Lionardo Ginori'; Anon., 'Diario, 1521-1532', f. 22<sup>v</sup>; Anon., 'Cronica', f. 167<sup>v</sup>; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlix, coll. 144-5, 152-3: Letters of Antonio Suriano and Lorenzo Bertolotti, 7 November 1528; Carnesecchi, 'Assedio', p. 457; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 176; Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 26, 69; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 359-60.

Soderini's attitude was to pretend not to care while secretly investigating the authors.<sup>69</sup>

Yet in February 1505 Soderini sought to counter public praise for the Medici excited, according to Parenti, when a wax statue of Giuliano was placed by his sisters in the church of Santissima Annunziata, by having the *Otto* order that the statue be removed from public view on the grounds that images of *ribelli* could not be represented in public.<sup>70</sup> Rather than move against those who were speaking in Giuliano's favour, Soderini sought to remove the source that encouraged such talk, and no attack on the regime was perceived in Carlo Federighi's cry of 'popolo', where the popular regime of the last republic dealt harshly with the equally careless cries of Buondelmonti and Alamanni. This raises the question of why it was that both the Medicean regime and the popular government of the last republic condemned so ruthlessly verbal offences that intended no threat to the security of the regime. The cases themselves provide some answers.

The condemnation of Francesco Tosinghi in 1522 explained that for his 'most enormous and most wicked crimes' he was to be exiled to Livorno for ten years, to give an 'example' to others, and so that he could not 'glory' in his crimes.<sup>71</sup> Such was the official explanation for the punishment of many crimes, and exactly the same words can be found for example, in the condemnations of some of the conspirators in 1497.<sup>72</sup> Yet these expressions were not just cant, and the need to punish verbal offences in order to provide an example that would discourage others expressed the very real fears held by members of the regime of the consequences of allowing those who spoke out against it to go unpunished.

In a *pratica* concerning the case of Luigi Manelli, magistrates advised that he deserved punishment 'with respect to the example of the city',<sup>73</sup> and Cerretani reports that it was argued that if Manelli was not punished it would lessen the 'dignity' and 'reputation' of the *Signoria*, and encourage further attempts to arouse some

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<sup>69</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 133, f. 95<sup>r</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 73.

<sup>70</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, ff. 46<sup>v</sup>-7<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>71</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 184, f. 83<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 108, ff. 131<sup>r</sup>, 141<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> *Consulte e Pratiche, 1498-1505*, p. 912 (March 1503).

'dangerous popular revolt'.<sup>74</sup> It was this same argument, that 'if they were not so punished it would cause others to perpetrate a similar crime', as the *Otto* once put it in a condemnation for conspiracy,<sup>75</sup> that was applied by the Medicean regime and the popular government of the last republic to careless outbursts and idle chatter. Thus as Parenti recorded in April 1513, the punishment of Francesco Marchi with fifteen lashes in the *Mercato Vecchio*, fifteen at the *Ponte Vecchio*, a fine and a twenty-five year term of imprisonment in the *Stinche*,<sup>76</sup> was 'all in order to give terror to others'.<sup>77</sup>

Nardi describes the year from the *parlamento* until the re-establishment of the Seventy and the other institutions of the Laurentian era in November 1513 as a period of particular nervousness and suspicion for partisans of the Medici.<sup>78</sup> There can be no clearer demonstration of this than that there were more condemnations in those thirteen months alone than in the entire following fourteen years of the regime.<sup>79</sup>

The Medicean regime seems to have been particularly determined to deal ruthlessly with verbal offences when foreign enemies of the city were threatening to attack it, and indeed condemnations for verbal offences provide the clearest illustration of the nervousness and insecurity of the regime in the face of external threat. This was especially so when the enemy in question was France, for her close association with popular liberty meant that any new French expedition in Italy such as that in May 1513 aroused, as one contemporary recorded at the time, the hopes and expectations of opponents of the Medici within the city of a 'fresh revolution'.<sup>80</sup> Such a climate may have encouraged outspokenness against the regime, but it was also one in which no public detraction of the regime was to be tolerated. Thus Parenti records that in June some 'malcontents' began to 'speak against the present regime' and that the arrest of Giusto della Badessa and the friars for prophesying revolution was made 'in order to give terror'. Indeed it succeeded in giving an 'example

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<sup>74</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 318; Idem, *Ricordi*, p. 176.

<sup>75</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, ff. 60<sup>r</sup>, 68<sup>r-v</sup> (July 1522).

<sup>76</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 155, f. 63<sup>v</sup>; Ibid., 230 (Libro di Condanne), f. 103<sup>r</sup>; Ibid., 223 (Libro di Bandi), f. 22<sup>r</sup>; A.S.F., Soprastante delle Stinche, Carcerati, 126, f. 1<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>77</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 89<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>78</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 24.

<sup>79</sup> See Table One above.

<sup>80</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 88<sup>v</sup>.

many', as intended, and 'the city seemed to have fallen into melancholy, because everyone was held back by fear'.<sup>81</sup> The *Otto* itself explained their punishment as 'to allay disturbances and prematurely remove scandal that can arise',<sup>82</sup> and the same terms were used two months later to explain the five year sentence of banishment from city imposed on the weaver Francesco di Giovanni.<sup>83</sup>

The condemnations for verbal offences in December 1514 of Bartolomeo Pandolfini, in July 1515 of Niccolò Paganelli, and in October 1523 of Francesco Torrigiani,<sup>84</sup> and Alessandro Manetti,<sup>85</sup> as well as Martino Scarfi, were all at times when opponents of the Medici were encouraged by a possible French attack on Florence, to expect and hope for the overthrow of the regime.<sup>86</sup> In the face of new French expedition in Italy the fear that the *popolo* would turn against the regime was such in July 1515 and October 1523 that troops were brought into the city.<sup>87</sup> In these circumstances ruthless action against those who spoke out against the regime was considered imperative, particularly if they spoke of a French attack as imminent, as Pandolfini did, or of their strength, as Scarfi had done. For his 'lying' and 'inconvenient words' of 'great importance' Scarfi was fined a hundred gold florins, exiled to Arezzo for three years, and banned from office for life.<sup>88</sup>

Francesco Guicciardini, a member of the *Otto* that condemned Pandolfini in 1514, explained in a letter to his brother how the *popolo* had 'pricked up its ears' to reports of a French expedition and begun to speak 'as is its custom', so that 'it was judged necessary that with the first one who erred an example should be given to the

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., f. 93<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>82</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 156, f. 22<sup>v</sup>: 'Ad turbationes sedandas et scandala que orii possint maturius removenda'.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 156, f. 78<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 187, f. 42<sup>r</sup> (19 October): Condemnation for words 'non convenientia' and of 'magnam importantiam' and 'in dedecus et vituperium presentis pacifici status et boni regiminis civitatis et communis Florentie' to be banned from office for life, imprisoned in the fortress of Volterra for six months and then exiled to Pietra Santa for six years. See also Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 435.

<sup>85</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 187, f. 43<sup>r</sup> (20 October): Condemnation for words 'contra presentem pacificum statum' to be banned from office for life and exiled to Città di Castello for life.

<sup>86</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 116<sup>v</sup> (July 1515); Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 433-4 (October 1523); Butters, *Governors*, pp. 248-9 and Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 322 (December 1514).

<sup>87</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, ff. 116<sup>r-v</sup> and Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 113-4 (1515); Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 433 (1523).

<sup>88</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 187, f. 27<sup>r</sup>.

others', and 'chance desired that it fell on him'.<sup>89</sup> Pandolfini was condemned, as Galeotto informed Lorenzo, 'to give example to the chatterers who do not have any respect' and to ensure that others 'do not become too courageous',<sup>90</sup> and he was banned from office for five years.<sup>91</sup> In the atmosphere created by a threatened attack on the city, the regime was particularly fearful that open and public detraction of the regime, even if idle chatter, could encourage more serious acts against it if left unpunished.

Yet the most striking illustration of the fears of the Medicean regime concerning the inflammatory effects of careless outbursts had little to do with an external threat to the city. The immediate execution of Piero Orlandini in November 1523,<sup>92</sup> only hours after his public dispute of the legitimacy of Giulio's elevation to the Papacy as Clement VII, struck contemporaries as particularly ruthless and severe,<sup>93</sup> and was described by opponents of the Medici as an act of 'tyrannical' excess.<sup>94</sup> The only execution by the Medicean regime for a verbal offence, it was done, both Cambi and Nardi recorded, to ensure that the subject was disputed no further.<sup>95</sup> Clement himself was displeased by the hasty execution, or so he sought to demonstrate, but it was necessary that he approved it, according to Nerli, as a matter concerning his 'honour'.<sup>96</sup>

Nerli's remark reveals that there was more behind the condemnation of verbal attacks in general, and Orlandini's execution in particular, than the nervous desire of the regime to deter further and more serious acts against it. There was the vengeful desire to exact retribution from those who made offensive insults to the honour of the Medici and the regime. The regime and its supporters found some verbal attacks so

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<sup>89</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, i, p. 232: Francesco to Luigi Guicciardini, 3 January 1515.

<sup>90</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXVI, nn. 627, 629: Galeotto to Lorenzo de' Medici, 27 and 28 December 1514.

<sup>91</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 160. f. 75<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 187, f. 69<sup>r</sup>: Condemnation to be beheaded in the courtyard of the Bargello within two hours.

<sup>93</sup> Anon., 'Diario, 1521-1532', f. 8<sup>v</sup>; Anon., 'Cronica', f. 149<sup>r</sup>; Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 180<sup>r</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 437; Rinuccini, *Ricordi storici*, p. clxxxii; Masi, *Ricordanze*, p. 271; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 64.

<sup>94</sup> Brucioli, *Dialogi*, p. 262; Guasti, ed., 'Documenti', p. 194: Zanobi Buondelmonti and Luigi Alamanni to Battista della Palla, 2 March 1524.

<sup>95</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 251-2; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 94.

<sup>96</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 141; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 59; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 64.



offensive as to call them 'bestial', and their perpetrators 'beasts'.<sup>97</sup> The man to whom Orlandini voiced what was described as his 'bestial fantasy' of Clement, was reported to have told Orlandini that 'you debase your soul to say such words of our lord Pope'.<sup>98</sup> Orlandini's execution reflected not only the nervousness of the regime but the extremely offensive nature of his insult.

Camillo Antinori's insult of the regime in 1517 was another that was described at the time as having been made 'very filthily', the result of his having 'come into so much bestiality'.<sup>99</sup> Goro Gheri wrote to Alfonsina of how Antinori's 'dishonest words' and 'brutish villany' had 'stunk sharply' in the noses of the *Otto* and the 'primi cittadini' and thus seemed to them to deserve 'great punishment'.<sup>100</sup> Indeed Gheri reported that Antinori's error had been 'so great' that some wanted him executed, although Gheri had been opposed to this,<sup>101</sup> and Antinori was eventually sentenced to be banished from the city for five years.<sup>102</sup>

The same desires to discourage other more serious acts against the regime and to exact retribution were behind the condemnation of careless outbursts, idle chatter and other verbal offences by the popular regime of the last republic. The notification against Carlo de' Medici recalled the execution of Piero Orlandini 'for a single word', and recommended that Carlo be hung, 'to give example to the others'.<sup>103</sup> That against Girolamo degli Albizzi, for which he was eventually banished from the city for five years,<sup>104</sup> spoke of the 'ugly' nature of his crimes and urged that his punishment would 'turn the minds of others away from proceeding in the same manner'.<sup>105</sup> In this respect the last republic was no more extreme than the Medicean regime, and it thus condemned on average no more individuals each year than the Medicean regime had done. Yet there was a more extreme insecurity, nervousness and desire for retribution felt by the popular regime which was displayed in the

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<sup>97</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1107, f. 132<sup>v</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 12 March 1519.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 1108, f. 208<sup>r</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 26 November 1523.

<sup>99</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, ii, p. 86: Luigi to Francesco Guicciardini, 13 April 1517.

<sup>100</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, ii, f. 137<sup>v</sup>: Goro Gheri to Alfonsina de' Medici, 7 April 1517.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., f. 150<sup>v</sup>: Gheri to Ser Bernardo Fiamminghi da San Miniato, 11 April 1517.

<sup>102</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 167, f. 59<sup>v</sup>; F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, ii, p. 86.

<sup>103</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 201 (Libro di Notificazioni), ff. 8<sup>v</sup>-9<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>104</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 130, f. 85<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>105</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 201 (Libro di Notificazioni), ff. 131<sup>r-v</sup>.

greater use of execution for verbal offences in the last republic and of public execution in particular.

The Pazzi conspirators of 1478 and the plotters of 1481 had been hung from the windows of the Bargello for public view.<sup>106</sup> Yet thereafter it became increasingly frequent practice to hold the executions of those sentenced to death for crimes against the *status* out of the public eye, in order to avoid civic disorder and, in the case of the nobility, to spare their families the infamy of any spectacle.<sup>107</sup> The execution, by beheading, of those condemned to death for conspiracy in 1497, 1513 and 1522 all took place at night in the courtyard of the Bargello,<sup>108</sup> no doubt, as in 1497, with the gate closed and only a 'few gentlemen' present.<sup>109</sup> Likewise, the beheading of Piero Orlandini, described by one contemporary as 'not in public',<sup>110</sup> took place in the courtyard of the Bargello with the gate closed.<sup>111</sup>

Orlandini's execution had been an isolated case amongst forty individuals condemned for verbal offences during the Medici regime, and had not taken place in public. By contrast, the last republic executed three of the nine individuals it condemned, all in public. Girolamo degli Albizzi feared execution for his offence in February 1528, and it was for this reason, as he later explained to the Gonfalonier, that he fled the city, to be condemned to exile *in absentia*.<sup>112</sup> The first execution for a verbal offence during the republic took place only a few months later, that of Jacopo Alamanni in November. It occurred on account of the disturbance that resulted from his call to the *popolo* and the Palace guard for aid against his pursuers, and aimed to

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<sup>106</sup> B.N.F., F.P., II, I, 138, ff. 77<sup>r</sup>-78<sup>r</sup>: 'Libro di varie notizie e memorie della venerabile compagnia Santa Maria della Croce al Tempio'; Rinuccini, *Ricordi storici*, pp. cxxvii, cxxxv; Landucci, *Diario*, pp. 19-21. On 1481 see also Capelli, "Lettere", p. 254: Bartolomeo Sgnippi to Antonio Montecatini, 6 June 1481.

<sup>107</sup> A. Zorzi, 'Le esecuzioni delle condanne a morte a Firenze nel tardo medioevo: tra repressione penale e cerimoniale pubblico' *Simbolo e realtà della vita urbana nel tardo medioevo*, ed. M. Miglio and G. Lombardi (Rome, 1993), pp. 190, 199-201.

<sup>108</sup> B.N.F., F.P., II, I, 138, ff. 80<sup>r</sup>, 82<sup>v</sup>, 84<sup>v</sup>; Landucci, *Diario*, pp. 157, 334.

<sup>109</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 109; Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 239; Pitti, 'Istoria', p. 49.

<sup>110</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1108, f. 224<sup>v</sup>: Lettere of 6 December 1523.

<sup>111</sup> B.N.F., F.P., II, I, 138, f. 84<sup>v</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 437.

<sup>112</sup> B.N.F., F.P., II, III, 65, ff. 341<sup>r</sup>-2<sup>v</sup>: 'Proposizione proposta al Gonfaloniere di Giustizia da Girolamo degli Albizzi'. This is a plea for the sentence of banishment imposed on him to be lifted, in which Albizzi expresses the desire to come to the aid of his city during the siege, offers advice on how best to conduct its defence, and gives information on the enemy's forces.

quell the disturbance and give 'example to others'.<sup>113</sup> To that end and 'so that all the insolent see the necessity of living quietly',<sup>114</sup> and to prevent the 'great disorder' and 'travail' of the Republic that would have resulted if the punishment he deserved was not immediate,<sup>115</sup> Alamanni was beheaded within a matter of hours of his offence. Furthermore, the highly unusual step was taken to have him executed on the balustrade of the Palace of the *Signoria*, from where his head was shown to the 'popolo' gathered in the Piazza.<sup>116</sup> The last time such a demonstration had been made was in 1499 when the head of the *condottiere*, Paolo Vitelli, had been shown to the *popolo* from the Palace after his execution for treachery.<sup>117</sup> Then it answered a popular demand for blood, where in 1528 it expressed the extreme nervousness and insecurity of the Gonfalonier, reported to have been almost overcome with alarm at the disturbance, and his fear that it would result in some move against him by his *arrabbiati* opponents.<sup>118</sup>

The two other executions for verbal offences, those of Carlo Cocchi and Ficino Ficini, came towards the beginning and the end of the siege respectively, and were seen by some contemporaries as excessively severe punishments 'for having simply spoken words and nothing else in benefit of the Medici', indeed unexpectedly so.<sup>119</sup> Cocchi had fled the city and been unwilling to obey a summons to appear before the *Otto* under pain of being declared an outlaw,<sup>120</sup> yet his friends and relatives, confident that his error was 'light' and 'not serious', urged him to obey the summons rather than become an outlaw.<sup>121</sup> In a remarkable letter, Cocchi's brother, Donato, warned him that 'you cannot do anything more to your ruin than not appearing here tomorrow'. Believing that his case would be treated lightly, Donato

<sup>113</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlix, coll. 145, 153.

<sup>114</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, pp. 82-3.

<sup>115</sup> Giannotti, *Repubblica fiorentina*, p. 197.

<sup>116</sup> B.N.F., II, I, 138, f. 86<sup>r</sup>; Anon, 'Diario, 1521-1532', f. 22<sup>v</sup>; Segni, 'Vita', p. 326; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 27; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 360.

<sup>117</sup> Landucci, *Diario*, p. 203; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 27.

<sup>118</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 359; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 69.

<sup>119</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 197<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>120</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 206, f. 25<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>121</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 199; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 36; Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 139.

assured him that he could come 'safe and secure', and pleaded with him not to let his wife and family suffer the costs of his impending banishment.<sup>122</sup>

Ficini was condemned to be beheaded during the day in the courtyard of the Bargello with the gate open,<sup>123</sup> and Cocchi also seems to have been beheaded there in daylight, and in public,<sup>124</sup> despite the support of his friends and relatives and others in the *Quarantia* who favoured leniency.<sup>125</sup> Their severe and public punishment was the evident result of the regime's intense desire to deter other more serious acts against it, and of its desperate fear of the consequences of allowing those who spoke in favour of the Medicean enemy during the siege, as Ficini had done, or even of overthrowing the regime in favour of the Medici, as Cocchi did, to go unpunished. Thus the *Quarantia* demanded Cocchi's execution for 'if we decide otherwise, it means calling the Medici into Florence and going in danger of the sack through sullyng the law'.<sup>126</sup> There can be no clearer illustration of the extreme insecurity of the popular regime during the siege. The difference with the Medicean regime however, was only one of degree. The Medici no less than the popular regime had ruthlessly condemned public detractors of the regime in the face of an external threat to the city. The more extreme treatment of Cocchi and Ficini during the siege was mostly an expression of the more extreme fears of a regime under a more extreme threat.

Cocchi's treatment was also a reflection of how 'hateful to the popular government', was the name of *parlamento*, as well as of the desire, according to Nerli, of those in the regime absolutely opposed to an accord to frighten, which it did, those in favour of negotiating an agreement with the Pope and his allies.<sup>127</sup> Cocchi and his brother, Donato, were named on lists of 'supporters' of the Medici regime drawn up by 1518,<sup>128</sup> and his execution was also an expression of resentment,

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<sup>122</sup> B.N.F., Magl. XXV, 552, f. 6<sup>r</sup>: Donato Cocchi to Carlo Cocchi, 8 October 1529.

<sup>123</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 133, f. 52<sup>r</sup>; Anon., 'Diario dell' assedio', f. 170<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>124</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 131, f. 212<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>125</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 139; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 203.

<sup>126</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 131, f. 212<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>127</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 199; Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 139.

<sup>128</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, ff. 99<sup>r-v</sup>: 'Confidenti e amici', names the Cocchi family. Lanfredino Lanfredini (d. 1518) is on this list. See also Appendix A, xiii.

Busini recalled, towards a man who was a 'factor' of the Medici family.<sup>129</sup> Cocchi's treatment was thus partly the result of the desire for vengeance against those too closely associated with the old regime. That same desire may have played a part in the condemnation by the *Quarantia* in 1528 of Michele Modesti da Prato,<sup>130</sup> to a three year term of imprisonment in the Stinche, for some 'filth' he had spoken against the regime.<sup>131</sup> Michele's father, Messer Jacopo Modesti, had been one of the officials mostly closely involved with the Medici as Chancellor of the *Riformagioni* from 1515 to 1527, when he was dismissed with the overthrow of the regime.<sup>132</sup> When Cardinal Giulio was absent from Florence in 1521 and 1523, Messer Jacopo was left to represent and execute the interests of the Medici and he was one of the five citizens who met to decide the fate of Piero Orlandini in 1523.<sup>133</sup> The Mantuan ambassador described him in 1524 as agent in Florence for the Pope, as Giulio had become, and 'head of the city'.<sup>134</sup>

The condemnation of Benedetto Buondelmonti to imprisonment for four years in the fortress of Volterra in December 1527 for his threat to summon the *popolo* of the countryside to his defence against the servants of the Syndics,<sup>135</sup> was also partly the expression of a desire for vengeance against those who had been close supporters of the Medicean regime, and this was one reason why some in the *Quarantia* had wanted him executed.<sup>136</sup> Indeed, as we shall see, his crime itself was a reaction to the official pursuit of revenge in the form of the Syndics. Yet Busini explained that the severity of Buondelmonti's punishment was the result of the desire of 'uomini popolani', men from the lower end of political society, and who dominated the *Quarantia* that condemned him, to defend liberty, the result of their fear of the consequences of allowing him to go unpunished.<sup>137</sup> Thus it would be

<sup>129</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 36.

<sup>130</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 130, ff. 21<sup>v</sup>-22<sup>r</sup> (3 February 1528): Condemnation for 'blasfemia' and words 'contra presentem pacificum statum civitatis'.

<sup>131</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 140.

<sup>132</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 324; D. Marzi, *La cancelleria della repubblica fiorentina* (Rocca S. Casciano, 1910), pp. 309-10, 319.

<sup>133</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 367-8, 437; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 139; Stephens, *Fall*, p. 112.

<sup>134</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1108, f. 284<sup>r</sup>: Baldino Alessandri to Federico Gonzaga, 25 February 1524.

<sup>135</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 129, f. 291<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>136</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 208.

<sup>137</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 145.

wrong to view the punishments of Buondelmonti and Modesti, as they have been, as solely or even mainly the result of the vindictive desire of members of the popular government to attack former supporters of the Medicean regime, and they were not protected by law.<sup>138</sup> Nevertheless it was because Buondelmonti was a former supporter of the Medici that he was perceived to pose a threat to liberty and punished, where Carlo Federighi had not been in 1504.

The summary condemnation by the *Signoria* of Antonio Brucioli in 1529 to two years exile from the city was also the result of a desire to persecute him, but it was not in his case because he was a former supporter of the Medici.<sup>139</sup> Brucioli rather had aroused the enmity of the friars of San Marco, partly because of his Lutheran sympathies, and partly because he had continually and openly attacked their involvement in public affairs. Thus they sought his persecution and Fra Benedetto da Foiano attacked Brucioli in his sermons.<sup>140</sup> It would appear to have been at the instigation of the friars that a *Signoria* composed of *piagnoni* had Brucioli detained and investigated by the *Otto* for writing letters to the King of France that spoke ill of the regime, and the decision by the *Signoria* to have Brucioli banished was seen at the time as the work of the friars.<sup>141</sup> Moreover, according to Varchi, the *Signoria* were said to have intervened because the investigation had discovered only coded correspondence between Brucioli and Luigi Alamanni. Support for Brucioli from friends of Alamanni meant that the *Otto* was divided on the case, and the *Signoria* was concerned not to appear to have had Brucioli wrongly detained without reason.<sup>142</sup>

Some members of the popular regime believed, as Giannotti later did, that the executions of Cocchi and Ficini for having spoken ‘very few words against the regime’, produced more ‘harm’ than ‘utility’ to the Republic, because they made ‘so many enemies of the Republic’, and their crimes were not so serious that had they

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<sup>138</sup> Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 67, 99; Stephens, *Fall*, p. 221.

<sup>139</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 131, f. 93<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>140</sup> A.S.F., C. Stroz., Ser. I, 67, n. 64: Ottaviano Ciaio to Cecchetto Tosinghi, 29 May 1529; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 34; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 420-1.

<sup>141</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 34; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 421-2.

<sup>142</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 34-5; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 422.

remained unpunished, much harm would have resulted.<sup>143</sup> And it would appear that those who sought to be ruthless did not always get their way. At the beginning of November 1529 the new *Signoria* deposed the members of the *Otto* because they were not using enough ‘diligence’ and ‘severity’ in proceeding against those ‘who show themselves against the present regime’.<sup>144</sup> Divisions between members of the party of the *Ottimati* and the party of the *Adirati* or the *Popolo*, according to Varchi, had paralysed the *Otto*, and the *adirati*, finding their calls for executions continually opposed, had themselves called for its deposition.<sup>145</sup>

Busini reports that the ‘popolani’ were grieving in April 1530 that the magistracies were not in agreement nor punishing those who committed crimes against the Republic. According to Busini the rich and noble who invariably inhabited the executive offices were reluctant to proceed against others of their ilk, and since members of the executive magistracies had seats in the *Quarantia* they could influence the court.<sup>146</sup> Busini thus explained that the severity of Buondelmonti’s punishment was the result of the time at which it took place, because at the beginning of the regime all the magistrates and thus the *Quarantia* were ‘popolani’ and so were keen to be severe.<sup>147</sup>

Not all members of the popular regime viewed former supporters of the Medici with the fear and hatred that were directed towards Buondelmonti, and indeed the Gonfalonier, Niccolò Capponi, was their foremost protector and may have sought to defend Buondelmonti.<sup>148</sup> Yet Capponi was later responsible for the execution of Jacopo Alamanni for his equally thoughtless cry partly because as Varchi says, ‘he was Jacopo Alamanni’, and an opponent of the Gonfalonier.<sup>149</sup> Busini records that as a result of the execution Capponi lost the support of many gentlemen ‘popolani’ who had believed him to be a ‘lover of peace’ in the city and now saw him to be the

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<sup>143</sup> Giannotti, *Repubblica fiorentina*, p. 194.

<sup>144</sup> A.S.F., C. Stroz., Ser. I, 66, f. 25<sup>r</sup>: Gianbattista Tosinghi to Cecchotti Tosinghi, n.d. November 1529; Albèri ed., *Relazioni*, 2, i, p. 242: Letter of Carlo Capello, 2 November 1529.

<sup>145</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 200; Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 151.

<sup>146</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 145.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 14.

<sup>149</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 360; Pitti, ‘Istoria’, p. 165.

contrary.<sup>150</sup> Alamanni's execution is a sharp reminder that Capponi's desire for peace, unity and moderation with regards to former supporters of the Medici, so emphasized in modern accounts of the period, did not extend to his opponents within the regime.<sup>151</sup> Indeed, the episode is a stark illustration of the ruthlessness with which the so-called 'moderate' Capponi was as equally prepared as the so-called 'extremist' *arrabbiati* to pursue the opportunity provided by a crime to despatch a feared and hated opponent, and is thus worth examining in detail.

Alamanni was one of a band of young noble *arrabbiati*, often referred to as *adirati*, deeply suspicious and resentful of former supporters of the Medicean regime and of the attempts of the Gonfalonier, Niccolò Capponi, to give them a place in the popular government.<sup>152</sup> They grieved that Capponi often consulted with Filippo Strozzi amongst others in his private quarters, and Alamanni had infamously threatened Strozzi as a man under 'suspicion' to desist from frequenting the Palace, with the result that Strozzi had left the city.<sup>153</sup> These young *arrabbiati* were foremost amongst the Palace Guard and were known to Capponi to have discussed seizing the Palace in the house of Dante da Castiglione, one of their number.<sup>154</sup> Capponi's fear that they would make some extraordinary attack against his position or even his life was such that he gave his support to the creation of a citizen militia, in order to counteract the forces of the Palace Guard and even as a prelude to dismissing it.<sup>155</sup> That was certainly the view of the young *arrabbiati*, including Alamanni himself, who on the day that the provision for the establishment of the Militia passed before the Great Council to become law, declared that all those who had voted for it were 'wicked', enemies of the popular government and 'traitors of Liberty', while one of Capponi's supporters mocked the 'child's play' of the Guard with its impending

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<sup>150</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 29.

<sup>151</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 231, 247, 251.

<sup>152</sup> Segni, 'Vita', p. 321; A. Suriano, 'Relazione di Firenze', ed. E. Albèri, *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, Ser. 2, v (Florence, 1858), p. 412; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlix, col. 144.

<sup>153</sup> Segni, 'Vita', pp. 312, 322; Idem, *Storie*, i, p. 75.

<sup>154</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 58.

<sup>155</sup> Suriano, 'Relazione', p. 427; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 80; Idem, 'Vita', p. 324; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 357.



dismissal. Thus began the argument that was to end in violence and Alamanni's desperate call to the Guard and the *Popolo* for aid.<sup>156</sup>

Alamanni's fellow *arrabbiato*, Giovanbattista Busini, later recalled how Capponi and his supporters in the *Signoria* used the 'occasion' to 'batter the opposite faction (*parte*)', although they failed in an attempt to have Alamanni examined in order to uncover and punish those who sought to 'perturb the government'.<sup>157</sup> Armed supporters and relatives of Capponi had taken control of the Palace and thus, according to Busini, 'popolani' in the emergency court were afraid to defend Alamanni.<sup>158</sup> Baldassare Carducci, one of the leaders of the *arrabbiati*, cited Alamanni's love of the 'liberty of his country' and recommended clemency,<sup>159</sup> but 'adherents' of the Gonfalonier outnumbered those opposed to execution.<sup>160</sup> Capponi's opponents were to recall the death of Alamanni simply because 'he favoured this Republic', when the Gonfalonier was prematurely dismissed from office six months later.<sup>161</sup>

Alamanni's execution was a rare victory for Capponi and his supporters. They had failed to have Pandolfini and the others most responsible for the printing and distribution of the *Sermone* punished in 1528 on account of divisions in the magistracies and widespread suspicion concerning Capponi's dealings with the Pope, according to Nerli.<sup>162</sup> Giannotti later recalled that in general magistracies were hesitant to proceed against *arrabbiati*.<sup>163</sup> Following the lack of action against Pandolfini for his oration in February 1529, Capponi's supporters complained that because 'the magistrates are all in their party', *arrabbiati* were able to do 'licientiously' whatever they wished, without being 'held back nor justly punished by virtue and force of the laws'.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> B.N.F., II III 433, f. 80<sup>r</sup>: 'Raguaglio del caso di Jacopo Alamanni per Lionardo Ginori'; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 26; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 81; Idem, 'Vita', pp. 325-6; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 358.

<sup>157</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 26-7; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 83; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 359-60.

<sup>158</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 27.

<sup>159</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 82.

<sup>160</sup> B.N.F., II III 433, f. 80<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>161</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 141. See also Pandolfini, 'Oratione', p. 374.

<sup>162</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 174; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 66.

<sup>163</sup> Giannotti, *Repubblica fiorentina*, p. 192.

<sup>164</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 129.

Alamanni's execution was reported to have pleased the 'universale' because he was 'a great madcap, and dangerous'.<sup>165</sup> As had been the case with Buondelmonti, it was fear as much as hatred that lay behind the severity with which he was treated. Alamanni's treatment was the result of the deep divisions within the regime, and indeed that he was so ruthlessly and publicly condemned for a crime against the *status* provides the clearest illustration of just how intense the conflict between Capponi and his *arrabbiati* opponents had become. That Carlo Federighi had not been so condemned for his equally careless cry in 1504 was because the divisions within the regime had not broken out into a conflict serious enough to affect his case. Federighi was remembered in 1504 to have been one of those most responsible for the storming of San Marco, and the seizure and ultimately the execution of Savonarola in 1498. Cerretani, a supporter of Savonarola, thus recorded the order for Federighi to return to jail under pain of being sentenced to death as evidence of some divine retribution against him.<sup>166</sup> Yet there were no calls to condemn him to Alamanni's fate. Federighi's case is thus perhaps the best indication that however divided the popular regime was under Soderini, it was never as split as the popular regime of the last republic.

The divisions of the first years of the popular regime after 1494 between supporters and opponents of Savonarola clearly still persisted after 1502 and they did play a small part in the severe punishment of Luigi Manelli in 1503. Cerretani recorded that the 'popolari' who lamented the treatment of Manelli for having spoken the 'truth' noted that the desire of leading citizens to have him punished ruthlessly was such that those chosen to examine him were 'all of the sect of the friar' because Manelli had been extremely hostile to Savonarola.<sup>167</sup> Manelli had been one of twenty-four citizens banned from the Great Council for a year in April 1496,<sup>168</sup> for having been a member of an 'intelligenza' of those opposed to both Savonarola and former supporters of the Medici and intending to favour each other in elections to

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<sup>165</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlix, coll. 152-3: Lorenzo Bertoletti to Bartolomeo Gualterotti, 7 November 1528.

<sup>166</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 447-8.

<sup>167</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 76; Idem, *Storia*, p. 319.

<sup>168</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, i, col. 121.

office.<sup>169</sup> Following the friar's execution Manelli had spoken in favour of the merciless repression of his supporters.<sup>170</sup> Giovanni Cambi was one follower of Savonarola who recorded his dissatisfaction that Manelli did not lose his life in 1503, recalling that it had been the second time he had been punished for 'seditious' behaviour and crimes against the 'stato'.<sup>171</sup>

As did the popular government of the last republic, the Medicean regime may have sought to condemn certain verbal offences ruthlessly partly on account of fear and hatred of the offender. Ten of those condemned appear on a list of opponents of the regime drawn up before the plot of 1513. Two others appear on later lists drawn up before they were condemned,<sup>172</sup> including Jacopo Altoviti, banished from the city for five years and banned from office for life in 1519.<sup>173</sup> However, the most eloquent expression of the particular need to take action against a well-known opponent concerns a case which was not condemned, and illustrates that the Medici could prefer to be lenient even with their enemies when they spoke out against the regime.

In December 1516 Gheri wrote to Alfonsina of how Giovanni Rinuccini 'displays so much hatred to the family and speaks so dishonestly', and requesting permission to arrest him and proceed against him.<sup>174</sup> Rinuccini was accustomed to say that the year of 1512 when the Medici returned was the year he died, which Gheri advised if it did not merit death did merit some punishment.<sup>175</sup> Rinuccini, wrote Gheri, was one of the most 'malicious men of this city, very bold and impudent and so full of poison that he cannot contain himself.' He was a 'capital enemy, impudent, bold and presumptuous' and thus given his 'quality', Gheri argued that he should be punished 'so that at other times he cannot do worse than talk'.<sup>176</sup> Opponents such as Rinuccini should be given no quarter, and when the opportunity arose, Gheri argued,

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<sup>169</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 116; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 125.

<sup>170</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 255.

<sup>171</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 187.

<sup>172</sup> See Appendix A, xii.

<sup>173</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 174, ff. 23<sup>v</sup>-4<sup>r</sup> (29 July 1519): 'verba inhonesta turpia et vituperia oblocutus est, quedam etiam falsa pro veris mentiendo pronuntiavit magnam infamiam et vituperationem importantiam ... in dedecus et vituperium presentis pacifici status et bonum regimen civitatis et communis Florentie'.

<sup>174</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, i, f. 167<sup>v</sup>: Gheri to Alfonsina de' Medici, 6 December 1516.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., i, ff. 186<sup>v</sup>-7<sup>r</sup>: Gheri to Alfonsina de' Medici, 15 December 1516.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., ff. 167<sup>v</sup>, 186<sup>r</sup>.

it was necessary, ‘with the colour of justice, to batter enemies and weaken them’. Gheri did not believe that ‘with forgiving, the regime would be secure’, and argued that it was neither an error nor a sin to want to punish those whom one knew to be ‘waiting for the right time to do us harm’.<sup>177</sup> Gheri urged that ‘clemency and kindness’ in princes was ‘laudable and necessary’, but not when directed at men who were ‘obstinate and hardened in their hatred’, for to ‘tolerate’ and ‘put up with’ such men, was to ‘use clemency and charity against oneself’.<sup>178</sup> The Medici evidently did not agree, for Rinuccini was not condemned, and Gheri’s plea, at the end of the first year of the Medici regime in which there had been no condemnations for verbal offences, implies that this was not the first occasion when the Medici were guided by clemency.

The Medicean regime may have been particularly concerned to condemn feared and hated opponents, yet it also condemned friars, as did the popular regime of the last republic. Amongst those condemned were also obscure individuals such as the tinker, Andrea di Simone in 1514,<sup>179</sup> and the parishioner, Giovanni Buoncompagnio, in 1517.<sup>180</sup> Indeed men from outside the guild structure and political society account for one third, fourteen, of those forty condemned during the Medici regime as they do of the nine condemned during the last republic.<sup>181</sup> Soderini may have been less concerned with such individuals than with more prominent citizens, and thus his main concern was to establish if the *contadino* in 1505 had been induced by them.

That regimes after 1512 pursued friars and members of the *popolo minuto* as ruthlessly as prominent citizens, and condemned careless outbursts and idle chatter as much as offences intended to arouse hostility to the regime, was on account of the

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid., f. 168<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., f. 167<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>179</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 158, f. 22<sup>v</sup> (4 February 1514): Condemnation for ‘verba turpia indebita et inhonesta contra presentem pacificum statum publice’, to be banished from the city for five years; A.S.F., Miscellanea Repubblicana, CXVII (Libro di Condanne), f. 60<sup>v</sup>: ‘per haver detto parole brutte et inhoneste contro al presente pacifico stato’. Andrea is described as a “caldernio”.

<sup>180</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 167, f. 77<sup>r</sup> (28 April 1517): Condemnation for words ‘in dedecus presentis pacifici status’, to be banished from the city for one year; Ibid., 230 (Libro di Condanne), f. 204<sup>r</sup>: ‘parlato in disonore del presente stato’.

<sup>181</sup> See Chapter Eight, Table Three.

belief that whatever its intention and whoever its author, open and public detraction of the regime aroused hostility to the regime and encouraged more serious acts against it and would do so further if left unpunished. This was a measure of the greater general nervousness and insecurity of both the Medici regime and the popular government of the last republic compared to the popular regime under Soderini. Regimes after 1512 were more fearful of the consequences of allowing verbal offences of whatever nature to go unpunished.

Contemporaries were conscious that a more ruthless attitude towards verbal offences prevailed after 1512 than it ever had during the popular regime under Soderini, and they knew the reason for it. Luigi Guicciardini recalled how in the days of Soderini groups of citizens had spoken 'freely and safely' in churches and elsewhere 'reproving the errors of citizens, of magistrates and of the Supreme grade', and 'damning without fear' those who 'unworthily' held positions in the highest magistracies, where during the last republic it had been continually forbidden 'to speak openly'.<sup>182</sup> The reason for the prohibition of such 'license' in the last republic, Guicciardini recorded, was the belief that 'so licentious talk' in the days of Soderini, made so 'openly' and outside the councils, had been very 'harmful' to the popular regime and had even caused its 'ruin'.<sup>183</sup> The 'unbroken grumbling' under Soderini had caused the return of the Medici in 1512.<sup>184</sup> This belief, as Guicciardini makes clear, was part of a more general view amongst the *arrabbiati* that the popular regime had been overthrown in 1512 because of the 'faint-heartedness', 'patience' and 'too much respect' with which Soderini had dealt with opponents of the regime and those found or suspected to have committed acts against it.<sup>185</sup>

That one cause for the overthrow of the regime in 1512 was that Soderini had been 'too gentle and too respectful' appears to have been an opinion common amongst members of the popular regime of the last republic, not only the *arrabbiati*, and thus in 1529 critics of Soderini's gentleness could also damn the harshness and

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<sup>182</sup> L. Guicciardini, 'Dialogo', ed. R. von Albertini, *Das Florentinische Staatsbewusstsein im Übergang von der Republik zum Prinzipat* (Berne, 1955), pp. 417-8.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 418.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 420.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 419.

resolution of the *arrabbiato* Gonfalonier, Francesco Carducci.<sup>186</sup> It was *arrabbiati* however, who most often referred to the causes of the overthrow of Soderini when they warned of the consequences of not being suspicious enough of former supporters of the Medicean regime or proceeding ruthlessly against those who acted against the popular government. Authors of notifications saw evidence of ‘a plot against this peaceful and holy popular condition’, in any trace of correspondence between papal circles and Florentine citizens, particularly those who were relatives of the Medici and ‘wholly of the past regime’, and urged the *Otto* to investigate by warning that ‘if you do not provide that justice has its place God will punish you and we will lose this liberty as in 1512, that is through not even believing, and enter into the worst tyrannical servitude’.<sup>187</sup>

The young *adirati* of the Palace Guard called on the *Signoria* through their spokesman, Pierfilippo Pandolfini, to be wary that Capponi’s supporters included those who were ‘more brave, more rich and more malicious’ than those who had overthrown Soderini, and that ‘in 1512, through not removing the evil humours, liberty had been taken away by only two young men (*giovani*)’.<sup>188</sup> In his *Sermone* Pandolfini urged the election of a Gonfalonier who would punish ‘public injuries’ even by his relatives, ‘avenge liberty severely’ and ‘guard it with diligence for the future’, denouncing ‘the deceptions of certain of those one trusted in 1512’ and the ‘clemency, not to say dementia, of the whole goodness of Piero Soderini’, that had caused his overthrow and the return of the Medici.<sup>189</sup>

These views were not new. Partisans of the Medici had also urged, during the crisis produced by the French expedition of 1515 for example, the crushing of their opponents before it was too late, arguing that Piero Soderini had been overthrown because he had not done so.<sup>190</sup> It was also the judgement of Niccolò Guicciardini writing in 1519,<sup>191</sup> and of Machiavelli, when he argued some five years or so after the events of 1512 that new states needed a ‘memorable execution’ to secure

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<sup>186</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 124.

<sup>187</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 201 (Libro di Notificazioni), f. 146<sup>f</sup> (April 1528).

<sup>188</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 28-9.

<sup>189</sup> Pandolfini, ‘Sermone’, ff. 80<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>190</sup> Butters, *Governors*, p. 271.

<sup>191</sup> N. Guicciardini, ‘Discorso’, p. 354.

themselves from opponents,<sup>192</sup> and that a citizen in a republic who wishes to use his authority for ‘good works’ needed to kill those moved by ‘envy’ who opposed his designs, in order to ensure obedience of the laws.<sup>193</sup> Machiavelli, who had been Chancellor of the *Dieci* when Soderini was Gonfalonier, argued that Soderini had been overthrown because he had not dealt ruthlessly with opponents of the regime, and killed ‘the sons of Brutus’, as was ‘necessary’ to maintain newly acquired liberty.<sup>194</sup> Rather he had ‘deceived himself’ with the belief that with ‘patience and goodness’ he would overcome the ‘appetite’ that there was in some of ‘returning under another government’, and thus be able to extinguish the ‘bad humours’ and overcome his opponents ‘without any scandal, violence, or tumult’.<sup>195</sup> Soderini had never wanted, as was a ‘necessity’, to use the ‘occasion’ presented by chance and their own ‘ambition’ to weaken those who were attacking him.<sup>196</sup>

Perhaps the most detailed attack on Soderini’s lack of ruthlessness was that by Francesco Guicciardini written during the last republic in a rhetorical exercise in which he assumed the guise of an *arrabbiato* calling for the ruthless persecution of former supporters of the Medici.<sup>197</sup> Rhetorical though it was, the argument in the *Oratoria accusatoria* was also based on Guicciardini’s own belief, expressed elsewhere, that a principal cause of the events of 1512 was that Soderini had been ‘negligent’ and ‘allowed the enemies of the popular regime to become too courageous’.<sup>198</sup> ‘Inexperienced youths of little reputation’ had been able ‘to overthrow the government so easily’, the *Oratoria* lamented, because the ‘dangers’ had not been regarded or dealt with ‘at their origins’, since the regime under Soderini had been too ‘negligent’ and ‘respectful’ through too much ‘goodness’ and feeling too ‘secure’.<sup>199</sup> Soderini’s own ‘negligence’ or ‘patience’ or ‘faint-heartedness’ caused his overthrow since he had not ‘remedied’ matters ‘at their beginnings’ when

<sup>192</sup> Machiavelli, ‘Discorsi’, III iii, *Opere* (1954), p. 316.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, III xxx, *Opere* (1954), pp. 386-7.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, I xvi and III iii, *Opere* (1954), pp. 135, 316, 317. See also *Ibid.*, p. 345.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 316, 388.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 316.

<sup>197</sup> F. Guicciardini, ‘Oratoria accusatoria’, *Scritti autobiografici*, pp. 197-226, 231-45. See the useful remarks in G. Sasso, *Per Francesco Guicciardini. Quattro Studi* (Rome, 1984), pp. 159-72.

<sup>198</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d’Italia*, iii, p. 235.

<sup>199</sup> F. Guicciardini, ‘Oratoria accusatoria’, *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 227.

it would have been 'easy', but had 'allowed them to run on' so that when he did want to take action 'it was not in time.' Soderini had not been 'suspicious' enough to be concerned about 'wicked citizens', nor forceful enough in securing himself from them. Conspiracies had gone undiscovered since his 'goodness' meant that Soderini had been reluctant to proceed against individuals on the basis of 'suspicions' alone, because he had considered it either not 'just' to do so, or dangerous to himself or not useful to the city.<sup>200</sup>

It has recently been argued that Soderini treated his enemies with prudence and it is true that he was able to have supporters of the Medici detained as the Viceroy approached the city in 1512.<sup>201</sup> Yet there can be little doubt that those who conspired against Soderini in 1512 were encouraged and enabled to do so by the mildness with which the Gonfalonier dealt with opponents of the regime, and that the desire to avoid Soderini's failures and his fate was a major reason for the greater ruthlessness and severity with which regimes after 1512 sought to treat opponents in general, and verbal offences in particular. Thus we find that when the conspirators themselves later urged regimes, both the Medici and the popular government of the last republic, to deal resolutely with their opponents, they blamed Soderini's overthrow on his failure to do so. Benedetto Buondelmonti wrote to Cardinal Giulio in May 1519 concerning 'malcontents' and that 'if they are not remedied in good time, they cannot be remedied when man wants to do so'. To illustrate his point he argued that 'if Piero Soderini had cut the heads off two people all those who were working and intriguing that your family might return to Florence, would have been routed by fear' and the regime would not have been overthrown.<sup>202</sup> Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi similarly argued in a personal and prepared address to a *pratica* in 1529,<sup>203</sup> that the popular regime would not have been overthrown in 1512, 'if Piero

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid., p. 228.

<sup>201</sup> Pesman Cooper, 'Caduta', p. 256.

<sup>202</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXLII, n. 9, f. 2<sup>r</sup>: Benedetto Buondelmonti to Giulio de' Medici, 4 May 1519, 'se Piero Soderini tagliava la testa a duo persone tutti quelli che si conchorrevano et praticavano che Vostre Signore tornassino in Firenze, si sbaragliavano dalloro per il timor'.

<sup>203</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 188; Segni, 'Vita', p. 334.



Soderini, most worthy Prince of the city, had been less respectful in the repression of the insolence and ambition of some few citizens'.<sup>204</sup>

In the aftermath of the overthrow of the popular regime in 1512 most contemporaries blamed the mildness with which Soderini had dealt with opponents of the regime. Not all however, placed the blame for that lack of ruthlessness solely on the misplaced 'goodness' and 'patience' of Soderini. Machiavelli criticized Soderini for his reluctance to break with the laws and 'civil equality', and seize the 'extraordinary authority' that would have been necessary to attack his opponents 'vigorously' and 'batter' his adversaries.<sup>205</sup> Soderini judged, as he often told his supporters, that to seize such authority, even if not used 'tyrannically', would erode confidence in the office of a Gonfalonier for life, which he deemed essential to maintain liberty. Soderini's concern was 'wise and good', according to Machiavelli, but 'one should never allow a bad to continue, out of respect for the good, when that good can be easily oppressed by the bad'.<sup>206</sup>

These lines, largely ignored by students of Soderini, contradict Bertelli's argument that Soderini used his position as Gonfalonier to make a personal bid for supremacy in Florence,<sup>207</sup> and confirm the view that his aspirations concerned civic leadership rather than princely power.<sup>208</sup> They also demonstrate Machiavelli's belief that Soderini's failures were on account of the limitations of his position as well as his attitude. Other contemporaries drew attention to the fact that Soderini, far from preferring leniency, often found it forced upon him. Certainly, it does appear that the lack of condemnations for verbal offences while Soderini was Gonfalonier, as well as the general lack of ruthlessness with which opponents were treated, were both the

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<sup>204</sup> A.S.F., C.P., 71, f. 50<sup>v</sup> (July 1529).

<sup>205</sup> Machiavelli, 'Discorsi', III, iii, *Opere* (1954), p. 316.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 316-7.

<sup>207</sup> Bertelli, 'Petrus Soderinus', pp. 93-114; *Idem*, 'Pier Soderini', pp. 335-59; *Idem*, 'Uno magistrato per a tempo lungho o uno dogie', *Studi di storia medievale e moderna per Ernesto Sestan*, ii (Florence, 1980), pp. 451-94.

<sup>208</sup> Pesman Cooper, 'Pier Soderini', pp. 69-126; Butters, *Governors*, pp. 78-81, 108, 113, 124-6. Bertelli has restated his argument in a critical review of Butters' work, 'Di due profili mancati e di un bilancio con pesi truccati. A proposito di un nuovo studio su Firenze repubblicana', *A.S.I.*, clxv (1987), pp. 579-610. The debate has been usefully assessed by R. Black, 'Machiavelli, Servant of the Florentine Republic', *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, ed. G. Block, Q. Skinner and M. Viroli (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 85-94.

result in large measure of the weaknesses of the regime that compelled it to be lenient. The cases of Bernardo Rucellai and Filippo Strozzi bear that out, and indeed their outcomes were to prove of enormous significance.

Guicciardini argued in the *Oratoria* that if these two episodes in particular had been ‘remedied’ it would have scared others, ‘making them for fear abstain from thinking of plotting against the regime’, and ‘liberty would have been secured for ever’.<sup>209</sup> For two men not being punished of their ‘insult’, lamented Antonio Brucioli in 1526, ‘perfidious tyranny’ returned to ‘our wretched country’.<sup>210</sup> Filippo Strozzi’s marriage alliance with the Medici in 1508 had been ‘counselled and encouraged’, the *Oratoria* declared, by those who intended to ‘prepare the road for the return of the Medici’, increasingly encouraged by ‘the patience’ with which the regime treated those consorting with the Medici.<sup>211</sup> That it was not treated as a ‘caso di stato’ as it should have been, ‘gave great courage and license, and that which could have been the foundation of securing liberty, was the beginning and origin of the ruin’.<sup>212</sup> That no action was taken against Bernardo Rucellai and the meetings held under his auspices in the Rucellai gardens from 1502 to 1506, led directly to the overthrow of the regime in 1512 because ‘from that garden’, Guicciardini wrote, ‘as is said of the Trojan horse, emerged the plots, emerged the return of the Medici, emerged the flame that burnt this city’.<sup>213</sup> As we shall see much later, not only had those responsible for Soderini’s overthrow, such as Paolo Vettori, attended the Rucellai gardens in those years, but they had also been involved in the Strozzi marriage. Thus the reasons for which the popular regime failed to take action in these matters, were reasons for which it was ultimately overthrown.

Guicciardini described how following Soderini’s election in 1502 Bernardo Rucellai was his ‘capital enemy’, and greatly discontented with Soderini and the popular regime, subsequently withdrew from all participation in public affairs, demonstrably to pursue his literary interests in discussions in the Rucellai gardens.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> F. Guicciardini, ‘Oratoria accusatoria’, in *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 228.

<sup>210</sup> Brucioli, *Dialogi*, p. 193.

<sup>211</sup> F. Guicciardini, ‘Oratoria accusatoria’, in *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 228.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 229.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.

<sup>214</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 283, 284-5.

Many of the 'discontented', as well as learned younger men frequented meetings there,<sup>215</sup> and Nerli describes how 'a certain quality of young men' who met there, including Paolo Vettori, had begun to attack Soderini, and 'without any respect one spoke ill of him and his every action was condemned', all of which was known to the Gonfalonier.<sup>216</sup> Despite calls from some of the regime for him to do so, Soderini took no action against Bernardo Rucellai or the young men.<sup>217</sup> Rather he continually tolerated them according to Nerli, either through too much 'goodness' or through not believing 'as he should have done' that they could harm him, or because he believed he would be able to overcome the difficulties with 'patience', or because it seemed to him 'dangerous' to attempt any undertaking.<sup>218</sup>

Guicciardini gave much the same reasons in the *Oratoria* for the 'incredulity' or 'cowardice' behind Soderini's decision not to proceed against Bernardo Rucellai,<sup>219</sup> but Nerli added another much more significant reason for Soderini's leniency. The young men meeting in the Rucellai gardens could attack Soderini with increasing 'security', according to Nerli, because they knew they would be protected from the magistrates and the *Quarantia* by the opponents of Soderini within the regime, headed by Alamanno and Jacopo Salviati.<sup>220</sup> Discontented with Soderini on account of their desire for a Senate, according to Nerli,<sup>221</sup> the Salviati and their supporters were powerful enough in the magistracies, councils and *pratiche* to impede Soderini's designs, and under their protection the young nobles became increasingly bold and less respectful, according to Nerli, attacking Soderini in masquerades.<sup>222</sup>

Parenti recalled that the Salviati and other 'primati' had been the 'authors' of the Gonfalonier for life, intending shortly by means of such a 'leader' (*capo*) to 'transform' the government of Florence into an aristocratic regime, a 'stato di pochi',

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<sup>215</sup> Idem, 'Oratoria accusatoria', *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 230.

<sup>216</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 98.

<sup>217</sup> F. Guicciardini, 'Oratoria accusatoria', in *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 230.

<sup>218</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 98.

<sup>219</sup> F. Guicciardini, 'Oratoria accusatoria', *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 230.

<sup>220</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 99.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 93-4.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98-9.

one 'of the powerful and noble'.<sup>223</sup> Discontented with Soderini by March 1504 that this had not come about, according to Parenti, the Salviati had joined forces with Bernardo Rucellai, Soderini's 'chief opponent'.<sup>224</sup> In the winter of that year Parenti reported that the Rucellai family, headed by Bernardo, an 'open opponent of the government of the Gonfalonier', felt 'certain injuries from private slights' and so was 'looking continuously for an occasion to produce political change if it could', or at least 'to give burden to the Gonfalonier'.<sup>225</sup> Thus Soderini was suspicious of the purposes behind meetings of the Rucellai family in their church of San Pancrazio and sought to prevent Bernardo's 'machinations' by having the Sixteen Gonfaloniers command that no more than four of the Rucellai could gather together. Yet the support for Bernardo amongst the other discontented 'primati' was such, according to Parenti, that Soderini did not dare to arrest him, despite his consideration that Bernardo would soon 'produce scandal'.<sup>226</sup>

While Bernardo Rucellai was supported by the Salviati, Soderini was unwilling to attempt proceedings against him, and the extent to which the leniency afforded Rucellai was forced upon the Gonfalonier can be seen from the consequences of a rapprochement between Jacopo Salviati and Soderini in 1506. Salviati had drawn closer to Soderini believing that the regime would successfully recover Pisa, and thus had permitted a marriage alliance between the families of the Gonfalonier and Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco de' Medici, which he had until then successfully prevented.<sup>227</sup> By then, according to Parenti, Rucellai had been occupied 'solely' with criticizing affairs as 'neither well-considered nor examined, of which would follow the greatest dishonour and damage to the city'.<sup>228</sup> Soderini grieved of Rucellai on account of these 'criticisms' and thought to 'avenge himself'.<sup>229</sup> Rucellai saw himself 'abandoned' from the support and help of Salviati, according to Parenti,

<sup>223</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, ff. 1<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., f. 1<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., ff. 40<sup>v</sup>-41<sup>r</sup>: al presente avversario al reggimento del gonfaloniere, senti certe lesioni d' offese in particolare el perchè cercave occasione continua a novità se havessi potuto, o al manco a dare carico al Gonfaloniere'.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., f. 41<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., ff. 2<sup>v</sup>-3<sup>r</sup>, 102<sup>v</sup>; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 272.

<sup>228</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II II 134, f. 102<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., ff. 102<sup>r-v</sup>.

and thus in danger of arrest in the event of ‘some revolution’, and so he left the city in April 1506 for a period of voluntary exile.<sup>230</sup>

The case of Rucellai makes it clear that the main reason that Manelli was the only individual condemned for verbal offences while Soderini was Gonfalonier was because Manelli’s case was the only occasion when leading citizens were united in condemnation of a verbal offence. And it was Soderini’s opponents within the regime that hampered his attempts to have Filippo Strozzi condemned. As well as his own relatives and supporters of the Medici, Strozzi was supported by the Salviati, Giovanbattista Ridolfi and other opponents of Soderini who hoped to damage the Gonfalonier with a defeat.<sup>231</sup> Had they not helped Strozzi, the outcome of the case, as contemporaries recognized, might have been very different.<sup>232</sup> To ensure a severe judgement Soderini was attempting to have the case heard in the *Quarantia*, where the greater number would be less open to the influential marriage and patronage ties of his opponents.<sup>233</sup> The Strozzi family were well aware of the dangers to Filippo should the case go to the *Quarantia*,<sup>234</sup> which, according to Guicciardini, if it were composed of ‘men of the middle rank’ might have punished Strozzi more harshly or even found him guilty of acting against the regime.<sup>235</sup> It was the support for Strozzi from the Salviati and other opponents of Soderini as well as from his family that ensured that the *Otto* heard the case itself and cleared him of any intention to disturb the *status*.<sup>236</sup> That Soderini failed in his efforts in 1510 to have Luigi della Stufa examined with torture, or condemned for a crime against the *status*, was also due, according to contemporaries, to the strength of Luigi’s friends and relatives, opponents of Soderini, and those “discontented with the popular regime” who defended him.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid., f. 102<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>231</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 327; Strozzi, ‘Vita’, pp. xviii, xix, xxiii.

<sup>232</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 42.

<sup>233</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 329; Cerretani, *Storia*, pp. 359-60; Idem, *Ricordi*, p. 179; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 100.

<sup>234</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi., Ser. III, 134, ff. 53<sup>r</sup>, 54<sup>r</sup>: Giovanbattista Cei to Messer Giovanni Strozzi, 11 and 19 January 1509.

<sup>235</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 332.

<sup>236</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 100; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 332.

<sup>237</sup> Parenti, “Storia”, II IV 171, ff. 45<sup>v</sup>, 46<sup>v</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 232; Idem, *Storia*, p. 400; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 104.

Having failed to have the Strozzi case heard in the *Quarantia* where his opponents would be less influential, in the winter of 1510 Soderini attempted to establish a provision, as was done later in the last republic, that *casi di stato* had to be heard in the *Quarantia*. The measure he affirmed concerned the ‘health’ of the city and was made to ‘save liberty’.<sup>238</sup> He hoped, according to Cerretani to be able to ‘avenge himself’ against those ‘grandi’ and ‘primi’ of the city who were condemning his actions, particularly his adherence to the French alliance, to ‘threaten his enemies’ and ‘batter’ them,<sup>239</sup> and to counter the rising numbers and fearlessness of those who desired the overthrow of the regime.<sup>240</sup> Although it passed in the Council of Eighty, the measure was rejected in the Great Council,<sup>241</sup> opposed by Soderini’s adversaries and many others anxious that it would increase the Gonfalonier’s power.<sup>242</sup>

In the aftermath of Soderini’s overthrow, Guicciardini was not alone in finding great significance in these events. Less than two years later Cerretani particularly emphasized the ‘little justice’ of the Strozzi case and the failure to reform the *Quarantia* as encouraging opponents of the regime not to fear the magistracies and thus to conspire against it.<sup>243</sup> Since the ‘negligence’ of the magistracies was also believed to have allowed the conspirators to do things ‘that even children had to discover’, for example during Pucci’s visit to the city in July 1512,<sup>244</sup> the failure of the *Quarantia* reform was the moment, for Cerretani, when ‘the *popolo* lost the regime’.<sup>245</sup>

The ‘weakness’ of the magistracies was such, Guicciardini wrote in August 1512, that citizens who had dared to ‘intrigue and plot against the regime’ were ‘tolerated’ even where there were ‘suspicions’ and ‘probable indications’ of what

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<sup>238</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 228; Idem, *Storia*, p. 397.

<sup>239</sup> Idem, *Ricordi*, p. 236.

<sup>240</sup> Idem, *Storia*, pp. 396-7.

<sup>241</sup> A.S.F., *Libri Fabarum*, 72, ff. 121<sup>v</sup>-122<sup>r</sup> (November and December 1510).

<sup>242</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Dialogo*, p. 254; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 104.

<sup>243</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 42; Idem, *Storia*, pp. 396-7.

<sup>244</sup> Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 43; Idem, *Storia*, p. 361.

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 398.

they were up to,<sup>246</sup> and the conspiracy of 1512 was not the first against popular government to have been encouraged and enabled by the weaknesses of the magistracies. Writing elsewhere of the plot of 1497 Guicciardini recalled how Fra Mariano da Ghinazzano had been sent to Florence by Piero de' Medici to prepare support from those in the city plotting in his favour. Fra Mariano's visit, and his 'privately' held discussions with 'supporters' of Piero, 'publicly' aroused suspicion of what he was up to, yet the 'divisions of the city', according to Guicciardini, meant that no examinations or punishments were made of it.<sup>247</sup> Those same divisions moreover, had meant that an ever-growing 'license' of 'publicly' speaking ill of the regime and in favour of the Medici had gone unpunished and thus encouraged the conspirators to plot, believing they would have wide support.<sup>248</sup> It was 'usual' in divided cities, Guicciardini noted, that crimes against the regime went unpunished, for public affairs went neglected and 'whoever has the disfavour of one part, has the favour of the other'.<sup>249</sup>

That the Medici regime condemned more individuals for verbal offences in 1513 than were condemned in the entire thirteen years of popular government was due greater ability to condemn those who spoke out against it. Tight control of the membership and deliberations of the *Otto* meant that the Medici regime had no need of a *Quarantia*,<sup>250</sup> but it was more able, ultimately, because it was less divided. The best illustration of that was the inability of the regime to deal ruthlessly with those suspected of intriguing against it when the regime split apart in the winter of 1526 in the face of a growing imperialist threat to the city. This was to lead directly to the *Tumulto del Venerdì* in April 1527, although one will find no mention of it in modern accounts of the crisis.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Dialogo e discorsi del reggimento di Firenze*, ed. R. Palmarocchi (Bari, 1932), pp. 253-4.

<sup>247</sup> *Idem*, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 138.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 137-8.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137; F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, i, p. 283.

<sup>250</sup> 'Instructione al Magnifico Lorenzo', ed. T. Gar, *A.S.I.*, Ser. 1, appendix i (1842-4), p. 302; Butters, *Governors*, pp. 197, 227.

<sup>251</sup> The matter is not touched on in either of the two brief modern accounts of the activities of the noble youths. See Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 17, 24; Stephens, *Fall*, p. 196.

As a result of the increasing boldness of opponents following the defeat of papal forces at Borgoforte in the winter of 1526, as we have seen, there arose a demand from young nobles for the distribution of arms. At the head of these young nobles were the cousins Piero and Giuliano Salviati, and amongst the ‘multitude’ of their followers, according to Varchi, Dante da Castiglione was one of the ‘principals’.<sup>252</sup> While partisan supporters of the Medici opposed the concession of arms, the young nobles were supported and favoured in the magistracies and in *pratiche*, according to Nerli, by Niccolò Capponi, Matteo Strozzi and Luigi Guicciardini and other members of the regime who favoured the enlargement of the government, and the divisions that had always existed within the regime finally became a split.<sup>253</sup>

The young nobles were not conceded the right to bear arms, but favoured by part of the regime they became increasingly bold, organized and subversive, according to Nerli, the more so that Cortona was irresolute and, having to wait for instructions from Rome, unable to remedy their ‘intelligenze segrete’.<sup>254</sup> Both Varchi and Nerli record how under Salviati’s leadership the young nobles formed themselves into an armed brigade that went around the city at night and clashed with the police squads of the Captain of the Bargello, injuring some of their number, yet the *Otto* did not dare to take any action against them.<sup>255</sup> However, Pitti says that whilst thanks to the support of leading citizens no action was taken against Salviati, the others were severely punished, particularly Castiglione as head of the episode.<sup>256</sup> Castiglione is certainly recorded to have been arrested and examined in the Bargello,<sup>257</sup> and then condemned by the *Otto* on 24 January 1527 for certain ‘just causes’, to be exiled to Città di Castello for two years.<sup>258</sup> The clash was probably the ‘popular commotion’ which foreign observers referred to at the time,<sup>259</sup> and the

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<sup>252</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 93.

<sup>253</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, pp. 145, 146-7.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 145-6.

<sup>255</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 93; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 147.

<sup>256</sup> Pitti, ‘Istoria’, p. 148.

<sup>257</sup> Anon., ‘Cronica’, f. 153<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>258</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 197, f. 8<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>259</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, III, ii, p. 88: Perez to Lope de Soria, 2 March 1527.



‘tumult’ concerning the request for arms which Foscari claimed to have quietened with assurances of Venetian aid against the imperialist threat.<sup>260</sup>

On 6 February Pitti and Giachinotti were arrested on suspicion, as we now know, of conspiring against the regime. Filippo Strozzi wrote to his brother that he found it hard to believe that Pitti would be guilty of anything more serious than ‘words’ and remarked that the regime had evidently ‘regained vigour and courage’.<sup>261</sup> Pitti, Giachinotti and Bartolomeo Pescioni, who was arrested with them, were not favoured by some of the ‘ottimati’ as were the young nobles, according to Nerli, and that they were never condemned nor sentenced was because of the hesitancy which characterized all proceedings at that time.<sup>262</sup> It was on account of the arrests, according to one contemporary, that on 8 February Niccolò Valori, Pitti’s father-in-law, left for Rome with Filippo, his son, and that both Carlo Federighi and Girolamo di Andrea Cambini also left the city.<sup>263</sup> Like the Valori, both Federighi and Cambini were well-known and listed opponents of the regime,<sup>264</sup> and both were amongst those opponents sent into exile or to their villas in 1517 and Federighi was also one of those detained in the Palace by the *Signoria* in 1521.<sup>265</sup> They fled, clearly fearing similar summary imprisonments or worse.

The young nobles seem to have been subdued, but they had not been restrained and their intrigues had only been suspended while the imperial army stopped in Lombardy.<sup>266</sup> As soon as the imperialists began to move towards Tuscany in March, the young nobles organized themselves again with Salviati at their head, to demand even more forcefully for permission to bear arms.<sup>267</sup> In the light of the *Tumulto del Venerdì* that followed on 26 April all contemporaries, whether the

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<sup>260</sup> Foscari, ‘Relazione’, p. 84.

<sup>261</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 99, f. 104<sup>r</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Lorenzo Strozzi, 16 February 1527.

<sup>262</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 147.

<sup>263</sup> Anon., ‘Cronica’, f. 153<sup>v</sup>. On Valori see also Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, col. 85.

<sup>264</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, f. 98<sup>v</sup>: ‘Nota di non amici’ and *Ibid.*, f. 104<sup>v</sup>: ‘Nota di non amici’ both name Federighi as well as Andrea Cambini ‘and his eldest son’. *Ibid.*, f. 94<sup>v</sup>: ‘Inimici’ and *Ibid.*, f. 162<sup>r</sup>: ‘Ultimi’ both name Federighi. On the date of these lists, drawn up by 1518, see Appendix A, Sources, n. 9.

<sup>265</sup> The list of those banished in 1517 is in Appendix B. The list of those detained in 1521 is in Appendix C.

<sup>266</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 147; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 93-97.

<sup>267</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 148.

magistracy of the *Otto di Pratica*,<sup>268</sup> the Mantuan and Venetian ambassadors,<sup>269</sup> or opponents of the regime such as Paolo Benivieni,<sup>270</sup> agreed that though some were demanding arms because they wanted to defend the city, others did so because they wanted to 'overthrow the regime'. Again their demands were favoured by Capponi, Strozzi, and Luigi Guicciardini, and by others, according to Segni, who desired through placing arms in hands of the 'popolo' to be able more easily to overthrow the regime.<sup>271</sup> Guicciardini, who was now Gonfalonier of Justice, held secret discussions with them in his house. While Cortona and partisans of the Medici opposed the demand for arms they could do little as the young nobles became more insistent, clamorous and violent and a member of the guard on the Palace was killed with impunity.<sup>272</sup>

Francesco Guicciardini arrived in Florence on 23 April and reported the great discontent amongst the 'supporters of the regime and of the country' for 'the worst and most inept way of government' of Cortona, incapable of conducting even 'mediocre business' well. Cortona 'wants to do everything and knows how to do nothing'.<sup>273</sup> Nothing was concluded, and if concluded was not executed and his way of proceeding 'would ruin a world'. The revolt followed three days later and was partly the result, as Guicciardini predicted, of 'some great error' of the 'inept' Cortona.<sup>274</sup> Yet matters had progressed as far as they had because the regime had fallen apart, and the young nobles had been able to clamour their way through the gaps.

That only one individual was condemned for verbal offences in the years 1502 to 1512, where the Medici regime and the popular government of the last republic condemned on average three individuals a year, was because the popular regime under Soderini was both less willing and less able to condemn such offences. There appears to have been less concern before 1512 to condemn open and public

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<sup>268</sup> A.S.F., *Otto di Pratica*, Missive, 18, f. 158<sup>r</sup>: Otto to Alessandro de' Pazzi, 29 April 1527.

<sup>269</sup> A.S.M., A.G., *Estera*, 1109, f. 312<sup>v</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to Federico Gonzaga, 26 April 1527; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, col. 581: Letter of Marco Foscarelli, 26 April 1527.

<sup>270</sup> B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 143: Paolo Benivieni to Bernardo Segni, 2 May 1527.

<sup>271</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, pp. 7-8; L. Guicciardini, 'Sacco', pp. 137-8.

<sup>272</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 102-3.

<sup>273</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, xiv, p. 3: Letter to Gianmatteo Ghiberti, 24 April 1527.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 5-6: Letters to Gianmatteo Ghiberti, 24 and 26 April 1527.

detraction of the regime that amounted to no more than careless outbursts and idle chatter, and to condemn those from outside political society who engaged in such verbal attacks. Yet that Rucellai and his young associates were not pursued with more vigour was because Soderini's opponents within the regime compelled him to be lenient.

The popular regime of the last republic was more divided than the government before 1512, and indeed the greater intensity of the conflict between the factions within the last republic was one reason for the greater desire to deal ruthlessly with offences that were no more than careless outbursts. The last republic was more able than the popular regime under Soderini to condemn verbal offences not because it was any less divided, but because the balance of power more often, if not always, favoured those who sought to be ruthless. Their desire to condemn verbal offences vigorously was backed up by the belief that the popular regime had been overthrown in 1512 as a result of the negligence, patience, goodness and respect with which Soderini in particular had treated opponents of the regime. That same belief had informed the calls of partisans of the Medici for the crushing of their opponents, and Machiavelli's famous advice to kill the sons of Brutus. If there was a new emphasis on force in Florentine political thought after 1512, as Gilbert argued,<sup>275</sup> then the desire to avoid the failures of Soderini was a major reason why.

Soderini did not kill the sons of Brutus, and that is why he was overthrown. But he had been unable as much as unwilling to do so. Those who successfully conspired to overthrow Soderini had not feared the magistracies and had not needed to, both Nerli and Giannotti later argued, having seen that Soderini, for whatever reason, was not working ardently to ensure that those who were acting against the regime were severely punished, and because they knew that in the magistracies they had so many friends that they would be defended.<sup>276</sup> Their earlier activities in the Rucellai gardens and involvement in the Strozzi-Medici marriage had gone unpunished thanks to the divisions within the regime. When the Medici regime split

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<sup>275</sup> F. Gilbert, *Machiavelli and Guicciardini: Politics and History in Sixteenth-Century Florence* (Princeton, 1965), p. 129.

<sup>276</sup> Giannotti, *Repubblica fiorentina*, p. 149; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 107.

apart in 1526 it was also to find itself incapable of dealing ruthlessly with opponents, with equally disastrous results. Faced with an irresolute and divided regime the young nobles were encouraged and enabled to clamour their way towards revolt.

Yet there had been conspiracies against the Medici before then, and even in 1512 and 1527 the inability of the regime to deal ruthlessly with its opponents was not the only or even the main weakness of the regime that encouraged the formation of conspiracy and explained its success. If we want to understand why plots occurred when they did, and succeeded when they did, we need to look beyond the punishment of political crime to the conduct of foreign affairs, and the ability of regimes to deal with their opponents not inside but outside the city.

## Ideas about Conspiracy

Conspirators in Florence asserted the legitimate right of the individual to overthrow the regime, and risked their lives to do so. They also sought to justify their actions to their contemporaries, and declare them good and glorious. How they did so, and whether that accorded with common Florentine attitudes towards the legitimacy and utility of plots are the questions that concern us here. Was there a clear potential for conspiracy within Florentine political beliefs and assumptions out of which plots emerged? To what extent can the Florentine proclivity to violent political conflict be explained in terms of the commonly accepted notions in Florence concerning the utility of conspiracy to oneself and one's city?

These questions have not been asked before. The warnings of Machiavelli and Guicciardini concerning the dangers and difficulties involved in plots are well-known,<sup>1</sup> but there has never been any attempt to explore the attitudes of Florentines in general towards the utility of conspiracy. It was certainly common currency in Florence that it was 'madness' to plot against the regime since it was bound to end in the ruin of the conspirators and their families. Nevertheless, it emerges that there was a clear and hitherto unrecognized strain of thought that despite all the dangers and difficulties involved, the risks were worth taking in pursuit of certain purposes. Florentines were generally agreed on the reasons for which men took such risks, and sought to explain conspiracies in terms of them. To that extent Florentines were generally agreed on the reasons for which the risks involved in conspiracy were, or least might be, worth taking. Conspirators were exceptional men and it was their decision to conspire against the regime rather than their discontent that made them

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, F. Ford, *Political Murder from Tyrannicide to Terrorism* (London, 1985), pp. 141-145.

so. But that decision was formed in a society that understood that there were reasons for which attempting to overthrow the regime might be worth the risks involved.

Conspirators themselves sought to explain the reasons that moved them, and did so in two ways, for two purposes. One was to appeal for clemency and mercy in their confessions, where they assured the government that it was not to blame, and declared themselves to be repentant sinners, enemies of the public good, and moved by their own self-interest, greed and ambition. When they were not pleading for their lives, conspirators sought to justify their actions, and as was customary in Florence did so by claiming that they were moved by love of their country (*patria*) to save it from destruction, and by love of liberty to restore freedom to the city. Della Robbia's description of the inspiration that Brutus provided for Boscoli in 1513 is famous, but it was not the only such description before the cult of Brutus reached its apogee with Lorenzino in 1537, and there has been no attempt to examine how Florentine conspirators in general justified their actions. For it was to justify Boscoli's plot that was the purpose of della Robbia's description, which Burckhardt and other historians who have accepted it at face value have failed to acknowledge.<sup>2</sup>

In a republican city-state such as Florence civic virtue began with the notions that there was no higher good than to act in the defence of liberty and the benefit of the *patria*, and no more glorious end than to give one's life in doing so. Conspirators in Florence had always been able to assert without any hesitation that to attempt to overthrow a government declared to be tyrannical and destructive of the country was good, legitimate and praiseworthy. The government did not dispute that when it condemned conspirators, but merely asserted that it was the conspirators who were the enemies of liberty and the public welfare. Conspiracy it will be recalled, was condemned as a crime against the liberty and public welfare (*status*) of the *popolo* and the city.

The idea that it was legitimate and praiseworthy for the individual to attempt to overthrow the government in order to restore liberty to the city or to benefit the

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<sup>2</sup> J. Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, trans. S. G. Middlemore (New York, 1960), pp. 74-5; M. Piccolomini, *The Brutus Revival: Parricide and Tyrannicide during the Renaissance* (Illinois, 1991), pp. 76-9; Villari, *Machiavelli*, ii, pp. 198-9.

*patria* was instrumental to plots and every conspiracy depended on it. The best illustration of this is that it was an idea that was increasingly being questioned from within the ranks of the discontented themselves. This was particularly so amongst supporters of republican liberty during the Medici regime. Machiavelli's 'golden sentence' from Tacitus, warning against attempting to restore liberty to the *patria* on the grounds that it often did more harm than good, is famous though often misunderstood.<sup>3</sup> It was a line of thinking that was to culminate in the 1540s when Donato Giannotti, another supporter of Florentine republican liberty, wondered whether Brutus and Cassius had been wrong to murder Caesar, since his death had resulted in the infinitely worse tyranny of the Roman Emperors. Was not tyrannicide, Giannotti pondered, an act of great presumption when it was not known what good or harm would come of it?<sup>4</sup> Tyrannicide was not a good in itself, but was to be judged by its consequences, and since the individual could not know the course of events, he should not attempt to intervene in them. Florentine republicanism, as is now well-known, had entered the Tacitean age.<sup>5</sup>

What is less well-known is that Machiavelli was not the only supporter of republican liberty before 1530 to question the benefit to the city of attempts to restore its liberty. There were others moreover, such as followers of Savonarola, who expressed the belief that all government came from God, tyrannical government was permitted by God to purge the sins of the *popolo*, and thus the Medici should be endured until God saw fit to remove them. The Savonarolans, it has recently been declared, provided the ideological justification for opposition to the Medici.<sup>6</sup> This was clearly not the case. It came not from Savonarola but rather from classical sources and the ancient doctrine of tyrannicide, from Aristotle, Livy and the praise of Brutus in Roman literature. Far from providing the justification for opposition to the Medici, most *piagnoni* believed that the Medici should be endured as a punishment from God, and in this they followed the teaching of Savonarola himself.

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<sup>3</sup> K. C. Schellhase, *Tacitus in Renaissance Political Thought* (London, 1976), p. 72.

<sup>4</sup> D. Giannotti, *Dialogi di Donato Giannotti de' giorni che Dante consumò nel cercare l' Inferno e' l Purgatorio*, ed. D. Redig de Campos (Florence, 1939), pp. 96-7.

<sup>5</sup> Piccolomini, *Brutus*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>6</sup> Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, p. 9.

Savonarolans believed it was wrong to plot against the Medici and even criticized those who did so. This belief was probably the main reason why the *piagnoni* were not, as is also claimed, at the forefront of opposition to the Medici. Plots against the Medici were the work of supporters of popular government or an aristocratic republic guided by the traditional values of Florentine republicanism rather than by Savonarola's vision of a godly republic because it was those values and not Savonarola that provided a justification for opposition to the Medici.

The most wide-ranging and detailed examination in our period of the dangers and difficulties involved in conspiracy was made by Machiavelli in the third book of his *Discourses*. There he described plots as the 'most dangerous and rash' undertaking men could enter, of which extremely few had the desired end,<sup>7</sup> a point he was to reiterate in the *Florentine Histories*.<sup>8</sup> He outlined the dangers and difficulties conspirators faced and the causes for their failure before, during and after the execution of their plans,<sup>9</sup> concluding for example that if to plot against one prince was an 'uncertain thing, dangerous and little prudent', to plot against two was 'wholly vain and thoughtless', because it was so difficult that it was almost impossible to succeed.<sup>10</sup>

In the 1520s Guicciardini recorded for the benefit of his sons that 'I would be prepared to seek the overthrow of regimes that did not please me if I could hope to do it by myself', but since accomplices were needed, and could only be found amongst 'mad' and 'malicious' men, who 'do not know how to do it or how to keep silent', there was 'nothing that I abhor more than to think of it'.<sup>11</sup> It was 'madness', Guicciardini wrote, to attempt to overthrow the regime for no other end than one's 'private interest' (*interesse particolare*), and whoever did so was not 'wise', for it was 'difficult' and 'dangerous', and few plots had ever succeeded.<sup>12</sup> Even if it seemed 'easy' to plot, this should not encourage any one to conspire against the regime, 'much less for their own interests', because success never brought the

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<sup>7</sup> Machiavelli, 'Discorsi', III, vi, in *Opere* (1954), pp. 320, 325.

<sup>8</sup> Idem, 'Istorie fiorentine', VI, xxix, in *Opere* (1954), p. 861.

<sup>9</sup> Idem, 'Discorsi', III, vi, in *Opere* (1954), pp. 325-338.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 333.

<sup>11</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Scritti politici*, p. 274: 'Ricordi', B. 158.

<sup>12</sup> Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 85; Idem, *Scritti politici*, p. 250: 'Ricordi', B. 53.



satisfaction intended to those who conspired for their own 'private interests', and condemned them to a 'perpetual travail', having to fear the return of the past regime. And the restoration of the old regime 'would be a thousand times more harm to him, than he has had use (*utile*) from its overthrow.'<sup>13</sup>

Thus had Florentines always advised their sons. Giovanni Morelli warned his in the early fifteenth century never to work against those in power no matter what their discontent.<sup>14</sup> 'Watch', Morelli counselled, 'that you do not criticize nor speak ill of their activities and undertakings, even if they are wicked; stay silent and do not speak if not to commend them, and do not desire to hear anything against them, nor work against them in any way, even if you were wronged by them.'<sup>15</sup>

To men like Morelli, those who did engage in acts against the regime seemed foolish and imprudent. Indeed, the slim chances of success, and high price of failure contemporaries perceived of conspiracy in general or of a particular plot, meant that it was a common reaction to conspirators to tell them that they were madmen. When rumours that Niccolò Martelli had agreed in France to poison Cardinal Giulio reached his cousins, they told him on his arrival in Florence in March 1522, that 'I was a madman (*matto*) and that I was looking for an unlucky end' and that 'I would have done better to stay at home and enjoy what I have, and not to enter into these fancies'.<sup>16</sup> 'He is a madcap (*pazzerello*), send him out of the city', Cosimo de' Pazzi told Niccolò Valori, when informed by him of Boscoli's plan to overthrow the regime in 1513.<sup>17</sup> 'You seem a madman to me', Filippo Strozzi testified to have told Prinzivalle della Stufa when asked to join his plot in 1510.<sup>18</sup> Fearful that news of the plot was bound to reach Florence from Bologna, Strozzi gave della Stufa time to flee the city before informing the government.<sup>19</sup>

If conspiracy was seen as crazy, so much more so was open and public detraction of the regime, the result of which, according to one contemporary, was

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<sup>13</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Dialogo*, p. 86.

<sup>14</sup> G. Morelli, *Ricordi*, ed. V. Branca (Florence, 1956), p. 377.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 275.

<sup>16</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', p. 254.

<sup>17</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 300; *Idem*, *Dialogo*, p. 76.

<sup>18</sup> *Idem*, *Ricordi*, pp. 230, 231; *Idem*, *Storia*, p. 399.

<sup>19</sup> Cei, 'Storia', f. 114<sup>v</sup>; Strozzi, 'Vita', pp. xxvii-xxviii.

simply to 'show the desire to do bad without any effect and to give occasion to who governs of remedying it'.<sup>20</sup> Contemporaries were occasionally so stunned by what they saw as the futility of particular verbal offences against the regime, that they could only explain them as the result of a complete loss of reason. Thus the *Otto* was reported to have found that it was 'melancholic humours', having examined him under torture, that moved Fra Spirito to cry 'popolo e libertà' in the Piazza in 1521.<sup>21</sup>

The case of Piero Orlandini in 1523 was also explained in these terms, particularly because it was recalled that Orlandini had been 'gratified' and given 'honour, caresses and favour' by Cardinal Giulio, only to insult him on his elevation to the Papacy.<sup>22</sup> Supporters of the Medici were at a loss to understand his 'ingratitude', and how it was that 'in the most beautiful time, and when he could hope for more, he had wanted to show his bad soul and in a matter unable to give him either utility or honour'.<sup>23</sup> The Mantuan ambassador reported of Orlandini's insult that it was judged in Florence that 'the melancholic humour, which begged strongly in him sometimes, put in his heart such a bestial fantasy and one from a man without reason, making him throw out his wicked soul against His Holiness, or God had wanted to punish him for some ancient sin of his'.<sup>24</sup>

Conspirators were well aware of the dangers and difficulties involved in plots. Buondelmonti and the other conspirators of 1522 from the Rucellai gardens had gone ahead with their plot, as Nerli remarked, despite the warnings of the dangers and difficulties of conspiracy that Machiavelli had written for them in the *Discourses* three or four years earlier.<sup>25</sup> Niccolò Martelli, on indicating that he was involved in some intrigue, had been told by his teacher-confessor to 'consider well to what I was doing and not to burden myself with such things, that could be the ruin of myself and all my family'.<sup>26</sup> Giannozzo Pucci confessed that only months before the plot of 1497, he had warned his brother in Rome that he was 'in no condition to be

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<sup>20</sup> N. Guicciardini, 'Discorso', p. 361.

<sup>21</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 383.

<sup>22</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1108, f. 207<sup>v</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 26 November 1523.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 208<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 208<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 138.

<sup>26</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', p. 267.

able to do anything in Piero's benefit' and would only 'bring ruin on both himself and us' if he did so.<sup>27</sup> Tornabuoni confessed that while they corresponded with Piero and prepared for his approach in March, the conspirators began to fear the plot would be uncovered, and so had a courier from Piero, Fra Serafino, leave the city.<sup>28</sup> Pucci's concern that Serafino would be arrested was such, he confessed, that he had told the friar that 'he was looking to bring us to a bad end', and that 'he would come to a bad end, and us together with him'.<sup>29</sup>

Conspirators took such risks, having decided that the reasons for which they took them made it worth doing. And they made that decision, exceptional as it was, partly because there was an understanding amongst Florentines in general that the risks involved in plots were, or at least might be, worth taking in pursuit of certain purposes. Guicciardini for example never dismissed conspiracy completely or consistently. Even when he did warn of the 'madness' of conspiring against the regime, that was only intended to refer to conspiracy made for reasons of self-interest, and indeed he emphasized to his sons that his advice was not intended to dissuade those who 'inflamed by the love of their country endangered themselves to restore its liberty'.<sup>30</sup>

Moreover, Guicciardini was prepared at times to accept the prudence of conspiracy even in advance of private interests. In 1509 for instance he wrote that the death of the conspirators of 1497 should serve as an example to all citizens that when they had a 'reasonable share of things' they should be content and not seek a better one, for they would usually fail.<sup>31</sup> For those who did not have 'a reasonable share of things' however, matters might be different. Guicciardini gave similar advice to his sons in 1530:<sup>32</sup>

Whoever in Florence struggles to overthrow regimes, if he does not do it for necessity, or will become head of the new government, is little prudent, because he

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<sup>27</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, ff. 17<sup>r-v</sup>: Examination of Giannozzo Pucci, 'egli non era in termine potessi fare opera niuna in beneficio di Piero, ma rovinare se e noi facendo altrimenti si'.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., f. 11<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Lorenzo Tornabuoni.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Scritti politici*, p. 250: 'Ricordi', B. 53.

<sup>31</sup> Idem, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 144.

<sup>32</sup> Idem, *Scritti politici*, p. 296: 'Ricordi', C. 51.

endangers himself and all that he has if it does not succeed; succeeding, he has scarcely a tiny part of what he had designed. And how much madness it is to play a game where one can lose without comparison more than one can win.

Thus Guicciardini could consider that despite all the dangers and difficulties it was not imprudence or madness to attempt to overthrow the regime if it was done for reasons of necessity or to become head of the new regime. For in these cases, to continue the paraphrase, one was playing a game where one could win without comparison more than one could lose. Indeed it was at the very time when he was writing the passage above, as we shall see, that Guicciardini himself had been forced by necessity to join the Pope during the siege.

Guicciardini was not alone in believing that the risks involved in conspiracy were worth taking for certain purposes. Indeed Florentines were broadly agreed on which purposes would, or at least might, make attempting the overthrow of the regime worth risking one's life, and thus always explained the reasons for particular conspiracies in terms of them. Francesco Vettori made this clear in a letter to his brother, Paolo, written after the overthrow of Soderini in 1512 in which Paolo had played a leading part:<sup>33</sup>

whomever tries to overthrow a regime or burdens himself with it as you did, men judge that he did so for one of these reasons: either to make himself great, or to make great one of his friends with whom he believes to be very powerful, or for some injury received from who governs the regime that he seeks to overthrow, or for finding himself in financial difficulties and judging that every movement has to profit him.

Vettori went on to explain to his brother that men could only conclude that in his case he had been moved by financial difficulties. For he did not have a following with which he could presume to rule the city, nor such 'friendship' with the Medici to be able to aspire to govern with them, nor had there been any signs of any enmity with Piero Soderini or his family, but rather the contrary, 'that is you were always at

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<sup>33</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 136, f. 219<sup>r</sup>: Francesco to Paolo Vettori, 5 August 1513, 'chi cerca mutare uno stato o se ne impaccia chome facesti tu, li huomini iudicano lo facci per una di queste chose che io dirò: o per fare grande sè, o per fare uno amico suo chol quale creda potere assai, o per qualche iniuria ricevuta da quello che governa lo stato che lui cercha mutare, o per trovarsi in disordine e iudicare che ogni movimento habbia a fare per lui'.

his side'. Only the desire to escape financial problems, Francesco advised, could explain to contemporaries Paolo's apparent sudden change of heart.<sup>34</sup>

Vettori makes no mention of any reasons other than those of self-interest, and it shows what contemporaries thought in practice of endangering one's life attempting to overthrow the regime in order to benefit the *patria*. Guiccardini gave much the same reasons as Vettori did when he described the purposes for which men had risked their lives to overthrow tyrants, and he concluded that few had been moved 'merely by love of the liberty of their country', which rare few deserved the 'highest praise'.<sup>35</sup> Whatever roles private and public interest may have played in them however, it is clear that plots were formed in a society that understood that there were reasons for which it was, or at least might be, worth the risks involved to attempt to overthrow the regime.

Conspirators always acknowledged the government's view that they had been moved by self-interest, when they appealed to it for mercy and clemency. The *Otto* considered in 1522 'how pleasing and no less useful is the present peaceful condition of our city to our most sweet country', and declared that the conspirators had been moved by 'ambition and envy rather than love of their country'.<sup>36</sup> The *Dieci* and the *Signoria* both wrote to the Florentine ambassador in Rome that the conspiracy of 1497 against 'liberty' was the result of the 'avarice, ambition and perfidy' of 'wicked men and malicious citizens'.<sup>37</sup> Thus it was that Giovanni Cambi ended his confession, which was read with the examinations of the other leaders of the plot of 1497 to the *pratica* that was to decide their fate,<sup>38</sup> with this request to his examiners: 'all that I have worked for, that is the return of Piero, has been from the desire that I had of his return, which I considered had to be in my benefit, not thinking to any other thing that could follow of it, and of this I accuse myself a sinner and I ask you

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> F. Guiccardini, *Dialogo*, pp. 39-40.

<sup>36</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, f. 58<sup>r</sup>: 'quantum sit dulcissime patrie nostre gratus et non minus utilis presens pacificus nostre civitatis status ... ambitione invidiaque, potius quam amore patrie'.

<sup>37</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 20, f. 74<sup>r</sup>; Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, pp. xlix-l: Letters of 21 August 1497.

<sup>38</sup> Cei, 'Storia', f. 52<sup>r</sup>; Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 207; Pitti, 'Istoria', p. 45.

for mercy for the love of God'.<sup>39</sup> The same motives can be detected behind Jacopo da Diacceto's admission in a letter, recorded by Cerretani and read together with his examination to the *pratica* that was to decide his punishment in June 1522,<sup>40</sup> that Buondelmonti and Alamanni 'induced him to do this with benefits because he had always had good from the Cardinal and loved him, but being poor the assistance induced him'.<sup>41</sup>

In emphasizing the good he had received from the Cardinal, da Diacceto reassured the government of its innocence. He had not been moved by hatred because there had been no cause for hatred. It was a common view amongst contemporaries at the time that the plotters of 1522 had been moved by the desire to avenge injuries received from the Cardinal, but the regime naturally denied this. That the conspirators planned to murder Cardinal Giulio was explained by the government in condemnations and letters to the Lucchese purely as a means 'to the execution by easier ways' of the overthrow of the regime.<sup>42</sup> The *Otto* emphasized how Piero Soderini, the ex-Gonfalonier, 'had received the most great and boundless benefits from this country and from the renowned family of the Medici'.<sup>43</sup>

Thus it was that conspirators emphasized their ingratitude. When Giannozzo Pucci appealed to his examiners in 1497 to have the 'infinite and immense piety and mercy of Christ our lord' in their hearts, he set out to recount the 'sins committed by me after all the benefits received first from our lord Jesus Christ, then from this most merciful people' from whom together with his examiners, Pucci asks 'for mercy not justice'.<sup>44</sup> Niccolò Ridolfi similarly ended his confession to note the 'benefits and honours' the Florentine *popolo* had conferred on him and his family.<sup>45</sup>

When they were not pleading for mercy however, conspirators claimed to have been moved by the love of their country to save it from destruction, or the love

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<sup>39</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I., 360, f. 11<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Giovanni Cambi.

<sup>40</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, f. 30<sup>v</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 406.

<sup>41</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 405.

<sup>42</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, ff. 30<sup>v</sup>, 59<sup>v</sup>; A.S.F., Sig., Minutari, 21, f. 39<sup>r</sup>: *Otto di Pratica* to the Lucchese, 1 June 1522.

<sup>43</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, f. 58<sup>v</sup>: 'infinite pene numero beneficia magna ac maxima ab hac patria et ab inclita Medicis familia receperat'.

<sup>44</sup> Cei, 'Storia', f. 49<sup>r</sup>; A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I., 360, f. 15<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> Cei, 'Storia', ff. 50<sup>r-v</sup>.

of liberty to restore its freedom, often both. In so doing they justified their actions and declared them to be good, legitimate and praiseworthy. Those who conspired against the Medici claimed to have been moved by love of liberty to free the city from tyranny, just as they had in the fifteenth century, such as in 1481.<sup>46</sup> Thereby they sought to justify their deeds by appealing to the ‘universal consensus of men’, as Giannotti described it, particularly as found in Roman historians, who celebrated, honoured and exalted those, such as Brutus, who in order to restore liberty to their country killed those who usurped its freedom.<sup>47</sup> In accordance with the commonly accepted doctrine of tyrannicide, Florentines from *Salutati* in 1400 to Giannotti in the 1540s had always denied the right of a private individual to kill a tyrant with a legitimate title.<sup>48</sup> While the Medici were accused of ethical tyranny the justification for plots against them was that they had usurped the liberty of the city as Caesar had done. This doctrine of tyrannicide had deep roots in the Florentine political consciousness. Florentines still celebrated the anniversary of the overthrow of the Duke of Athens in 1343 on St. Anne’s day, which had been declared a second Easter, a perpetual holiday, to celebrate the ‘liberation of the *popolo* from tyranny by the grace of God and the virtue of good men’.<sup>49</sup>

It was this that lay behind Agostino Capponi’s reported declaration on the night before his execution in 1513, that ‘I die willingly, still innocent’.<sup>50</sup> Boscoli and Capponi are recorded to have had told their examiners that they had planned to kill the Medici ‘in order to free their country’, the ‘love’ of which had ‘driven’ them to plot.<sup>51</sup> Parenti, who was evidently one contemporary who believed them, records that they died always affirming that they had aimed ‘to free their country from tyranny’.<sup>52</sup> Niccolò Valori wrote in his *Ricordanze* that Boscoli aimed ‘to free his country’.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Capelli, ‘Lettere’, p. 255: Antonio Montecatini to Duke Ercole d’Este, 9 June 1481.

<sup>47</sup> Giannotti, *Dialogi*, pp. 89-90.

<sup>48</sup> O. Jászi and J. Lewis, *Against the Tyrant: The Tradition and Theory of Tyrannicide* (Glencoe, Illinois, 1957), pp. 27-8; Giannotti, *Dialogi*, pp. 92-3.

<sup>49</sup> R. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (London and New York, 1980), p. 222; J. Heers, *Parties and Political Life in the Medieval West*, trans. D. Nicholas (Oxford-New York-Amsterdam, 1977), pp. 164, 274. See also Rubinstein, *Palazzo Vecchio*, pp. 71-2.

<sup>50</sup> Della Robbia, ‘Recitazione’, p. 299.

<sup>51</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 299; Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 75.

<sup>52</sup> Parenti, ‘Storia’, II IV 171, f. 84<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>53</sup> N. Valori, ‘Ricordanze’, f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

In a poem of December 1522 Luigi Alamanni mourned the death at the hands of the 'perfidious tyrant' and 'horrendous monster' of his two co-conspirators, da Diacceto and Alamanni, the soldier, referred to as Menalca and Mopso, and who 'with so much love' had placed their 'faithful hand' to draw the city out 'from so dark a prison' where it had lain 'for so many years'.<sup>54</sup> Their act was 'just', they were in heaven with the 'highest glory in the world', and he proposed an epitaph describing them as 'full of eternal honour'.<sup>55</sup> Antonio Brucioli's 1526 dialogue 'On Fortitude' clearly includes both executed conspirators and Alamanni the poet among the group of speakers given invented names.<sup>56</sup> The group is described as 'the greatest lovers of the liberty of their country, which it happens is in the height of tyranny and pestiferous servitude, and of whom there are none who would not give their life, believing to recover that liberty'.<sup>57</sup> Speakers in other dialogues mourn that the executed pair had been 'unjustly' killed by a 'cruel tyrannical monster'.<sup>58</sup>

In one dialogue, da Diacceto and Alamanni the soldier appear condemned and awaiting death 'for their country'.<sup>59</sup> They lament their fate for having always been 'most ardent lovers of the public liberty'.<sup>60</sup> Alamanni grieves that he had not achieved his 'laudable' aims, but is assured that God judges the 'right intentions' of men, not their success.<sup>61</sup> Since they met their death attempting to 'benefit their country (*patria*)' and acting in the 'benefit of their own republic', Brucioli declared it 'laudable' and 'greatly to be chosen', and assures them of immortality.<sup>62</sup>

In poems grieving for the death of Zanobi Buondelmonti in November 1527, Alamanni recognized that his friend had 'raised his eyes to mortal glory' more than

<sup>54</sup> L. Alamanni, *Versi e prose*, ed. P. Raffaelli (Florence, 1859) i, pp. 60-64: 'Che forza ha più la nostra ria fortuna'. See also *Ibid.*, pp. 65-8.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>56</sup> Brucioli, *Dialogi*, pp. 309-10. Amongst the speakers are 'Eufronio, l'uno e l'altro Leutideno'. Eufronio is praised for his 'lettere grece e latine' so indentifying him as Jacopo da Diacceto. One Leutideno is praised for his 'perizia militare' while the other's 'onorata poesia' is praised, clearly referring to Luigi di Tommaso Alamanni, the soldier, and Luigi di Messer Piero Alamanni, the poet.

<sup>57</sup> Brucioli, *Dialogi*, p. 309.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 262, 269. Referred to as Eufronio and Leutideno, 'el più alto ingegno d' uomo che si potessi numerare fra sapienti, onore delle grece e latine lettere de' nostri tempi, e d' una vera luce della milizia'.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 504. The speakers are again called Eufronio and Leutideno.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 500.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 501.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 502.



to the life hereafter, and wondered if that had been the reason why it had not pleased God to grant the plot success. But he praised the 'zeal for the common good of his country' with which Buondelmonti had sought 'liberty more than a long life' and defended the hope that he and his friends had held that it would have been God's pleasure to end the city's servitude 'by their work' in that 'honoured enterprise'.<sup>63</sup> Neither 'gold and silver' nor the 'desire to climb more than is fitting to the civil power', had moved Buondelmonti to plot, but the 'just wish to have all equal, and no masters'. Buondelmonti had not been moved, as he had been commonly accused of being, Alamanni wrote, by 'the spur of avenging himself', and he had sought 'humility more than blood or death from his enemy'. Only 'true goodness', the desire of 'awakening liberty' and of not seeing his 'blossoming home so rolled up in the mud under another's yoke ... this alone directed and drove him'.<sup>64</sup> Buondelmonti had been moved by the desire for 'mortal glory' but that was the 'just love that he had more for his country than for himself', because his 'generous heart resented being weighed down by the impious burden of unjust servitude that then oppressed it'.<sup>65</sup>

As well as claiming that they had been moved by love of liberty to attempt to free their country from tyranny, the conspirators in 1513 and 1522 made a further claim: that they had been inspired by the example of Julius Caesar's assassin, Brutus. Most famously, Luca della Robbia reported within six years of Boscoli's execution,<sup>66</sup> that Boscoli had recalled the inspiration of Brutus. Della Robbia states his belief in the veracity of Boscoli and Capponi's claim in their examinations to have wanted to 'free the city', and declares his intention to show Boscoli's 'distinguished piety towards his country'.<sup>67</sup> He records that Boscoli had told him on the night before his death that he was finding it difficult to 'unite' or 'convert' his spirit to God, and ask for His forgiveness and mercy, since his head was full of thoughts of Brutus.<sup>68</sup> Boscoli asked him to 'remove Brutus from my head, so that I might make this step entirely as a Christian.' According to della Robbia, Boscoli was conscious that, from

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<sup>63</sup> Alamanni, *Versi*, i, pp. 357, 358: 'Alto Signor, che dal celeste nido'. See also *Ibid.*, pp. 341, 354-5.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 357.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 358, 359.

<sup>66</sup> G. Fragniti, 'Luca della Robbia', *D.B.I.*, xxxvii, pp. 291-3.

<sup>67</sup> Della Robbia, 'Recitazione', pp. 283-4.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 286-9.

a Christian point of view, the classical ideas of the glory of tyrannicide which had inspired him 'do not have the true end', and had led him to act in pursuit of earthly rather than heavenly glory.<sup>69</sup> To Capponi's claims to die still innocent on account of the virtue of his deed, Della Robbia had replied that only Jesus died innocent, and told him to 'let go of every fantasy of justification' and ask Christ to forgive his sins.<sup>70</sup>

Less well-known, indeed apparently unnoticed before, are similar sentiments in a poem by Alamanni written after Buondelmonti's death, extolling their 'honoured enterprise'. Alamanni praises his friend in lines addressed to Brutus, declaring that 'after you left the world, there was no more beautiful imitator of your great deeds'. While regretful that Buondelmonti had not succeeded as Brutus had, Alamanni praised his 'learned search of ancient books, to reform our laws and customs', whose authors were his 'teachers and guides' and who 'showed the way to the civil life of peace or arms'.<sup>71</sup>

Since the early fifteenth century Brutus had been revered in Florence for his assassination of the usurper of Roman liberty, a reverence based on the praise which classical writers accorded him. Bruni for example had recalled the praise heaped on Brutus by the Senate for restoring liberty and the virtue attributed to him by Roman historians and declared that he ought to be 'extolled to the sky'.<sup>72</sup> In emphasizing that Buondelmonti and Boscoli had been inspired by Brutus, Alamanni and della Robbia were further emphasizing that they had been moved to plot by love of liberty, and justifying their attempts to restore freedom to the city by reference to the praise with which classical literature extolled the glory of Brutus for doing the same. In a similar way Filippo Strozzi claimed the influence of classical sources when he wrote in January 1527 to Zanobi Buondelmonti and Battista della Palla, with whom he was then intriguing against the Medici. To assure them of his desire to show citizens that 'I know that mind and will that every good gentleman should have', he wrote that: 'I

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 290.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 299.

<sup>71</sup> Alamanni, *Versi*, i, pp. 339-40: 'Poichè nuovo dolor quaggiù m' involva'.

<sup>72</sup> H. Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance* (Princeton, 1955), p. 455; Piccolomini, *Brutus*, p. 57

read Livy and *The Politics* of Aristotle continually, and from the one I think of drawing the practice, and from the other the theory of a good gentleman and virile citizen; from where I feel myself more confirmed every day, and I feel the desire in me increase.<sup>73</sup>

Such appeals to classical examples had been made by conspirators in the fifteenth century, such as Girolamo Olgiati, the assassin of the Duke of Milan in 1476, and were to reach their height with Lorenzino de' Medici in 1537. Burckhardt and more recently Piccolomini have both seen such appeals as evidence of a conscious attempt by conspirators to model themselves on classical examples, and thus as striking evidence of the extent to which Renaissance Italians sought to imitate antiquity.<sup>74</sup> That ignores the purpose for which such appeals were made, but at the very least the claim to have been inspired by Brutus reveals the authority in which classical sources were held, to the extent that conspirators sought justification for their deeds directly from classical examples, and from the glory which classical sources attached to Brutus for having attempted to restore liberty to his country.

For there were other sources in which Florentines found justification for plots against the Medici. Della Robbia, for example, presented an argument that Boscoli was 'blessed' and 'a martyr', because he had the 'best intention', and because St. Thomas Aquinas said it was 'worthy' to conspire against a tyrant who usurped his power.<sup>75</sup> That it was justified for a private individual to kill a usurper to free his country had been a common part of medieval and scholastic thought, upheld by John of Salisbury and Bartolus as well as Aquinas.<sup>76</sup> Della Robbia was a follower of Savonarola, but it was clearly not Savonarola, as has been asserted, who provided the justification for opposition to the Medici. It was from classical sources that the conspirators themselves found the justification for their deeds.

Where those who conspired against the Medici claimed to have been moved by love of liberty to restore freedom to the city, those who conspired against the

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<sup>73</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 99, f. 21<sup>r</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Zanobi Buondelmonti and Battista della Palla, 30 January 1527.

<sup>74</sup> Burckhardt, *Civilisation*, pp. 75-6; Piccolomini, *Brutus*, pp. 62-6.

<sup>75</sup> Della Robbia, 'Recitazione', p. 309.

<sup>76</sup> Jászi and Lewis, *Against the Tyrant*, pp. 1, 17-27.

popular government before 1512 claimed to have been moved by patriotism to save their country from ruin. In doing so they sought to justify their actions by appealing to one of the fundamental notions of civic virtue in Florence, that there was no act more praiseworthy to benefit one's country, and no end more glorious than to give's one life doing so. The best illustration of that is how conspirators were condemned for betraying and damaging the *patria*. To the government, conspirators were 'perverse', as the *Balia* described them in 1522, 'malicious citizens and enemies of the public good', whose 'most cruelly ordered' and 'wicked counsels and perverse machinations', would have resulted, if they had had their 'wicked effect', in 'universal harm' in the city, and untold 'detriment' to the republic.<sup>77</sup> Those who had brought Bourbon to the city before the *Tumulto* in 1527, Alessandro de' Medici was informed, were 'scoundrels, treacherous enemies not only of us, but of their country'.<sup>78</sup> The conspirators of 1497 were 'parricidal and perfidious citizens', who had 'wanted to betray their country', according to the *Dieci*,<sup>79</sup> and a speaker in a *pratica* had called for their execution, 'in fact they should not even be buried', because 'one can find no greater crime than that against one's country' since 'everyone is more obliged to their country than to their father.'<sup>80</sup>

The conspirators themselves however, justified their deeds by claiming to have sought to benefit the city. Lucrezia Salviati was reported to have confessed that she had conspired to have Piero return in 1497, because 'when the Medici were governing the land, it was luxuriant, and was not as it is now, burdened by war, hunger, disease and sedition'.<sup>81</sup> Piero himself, to rouse support on his entry into Florentine territory, had made it known that he was coming 'not as an enemy, but as a citizen in order to enter his house', to give bread to the starving, and 'to remove the

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<sup>77</sup> A.S.F., Balie, 43, f. 205<sup>r</sup>: 'quanta latura et danno universale sarebbe seguito nella nostra città, et quanto detrimento alla republica se i nefandi consigli et perversi machinationi et tractati d' alcuni maligni cittadini et inimici del bene publico havessino havuto el loro desiderato et iniquo effecto, secondo che per loro crudelisimamente era stato ordinato'.

<sup>78</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXXVI, n. 89: Fabrizio Peregrino to Alessandro de' Medici, 28 April 1527, 'ribaldi, traditori nemici non solamente nostri ma della patria loro'.

<sup>79</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balia, Missive, 20, ff. 74<sup>r-v</sup>, 76<sup>r</sup>: 21 and 22 August 1497; Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, pp. xlix-l: 21 August 1497.

<sup>80</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 360, f. 10<sup>r</sup>; Cei, 'Storia', f. 52<sup>v</sup>: 17 August 1497.

<sup>81</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, i, col. 723: Letter of Antonio Vincivera, 24 August 1497.

city and the countryside from the hands of those who, through their wicked governance, were holding it in war and in hunger'.<sup>82</sup>

In 1512 first Soderini and then the popular government were overthrown by force, but the new government sought to deny to foreign powers that compulsion had been used at all. On the day of Soderini's overthrow, the *Signoria* wrote to Florentine orators with the Viceroy and elsewhere explaining how the Gonfalonier had 'spontaneously renounced and resigned his office, as he has offered to do on many occasions both in public and in private'.<sup>83</sup> The *Dieci* wrote repeatedly to Florentine ambassadors that Soderini had 'resigned his office',<sup>84</sup> and did so even when it described how Soderini had continually acted 'against the universal disposition of all the city'.<sup>85</sup> The Medici emphasized to their representative in Venice that the deposition of the Gonfalonier and the *parlamento* had both been made at the instance of the *Signoria*.<sup>86</sup> Lorenzo was praised in procession and song during the festival of San Giovanni in 1514 as a new Camillus, the 'liberator' of his country who had saved his city from the disastrous alliance with France.<sup>87</sup> But there is no hint that there was any attempt in the aftermath of the events 1512 to explain them as the result of the justified use of force.

Yet during the coup itself, the leaders of Soderini's overthrow are recorded to have told the Gonfalonier and those magistrates and colleges present in the Palace that he should 'go home in order not to ruin this people'.<sup>88</sup> Lorenzo Strozzi remarked that 'under the shade' of conserving their country from the sack they had declared during the take-over that Soderini should not be permitted to 'ruin the city, for the sake of his personal enmities'.<sup>89</sup> Niccolò Valori accused the 'restless' and 'poverty-stricken citizens' involved of being 'unashamed' to force entry to the Public Palace,

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<sup>82</sup> 'Frammenti storici', in *Opere minori di Niccolò Machiavelli*, p. 78.

<sup>83</sup> A.S.F., Sig., Missive, 57, f. 110<sup>v</sup> (31 August 1512): 'spontaneamente come più altre volte haveva offerto in publico et in privato ha renuntiato et deposto lo offitio suo'.

<sup>84</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 39, ff. 90<sup>r</sup>-91<sup>r</sup>, 92<sup>v</sup>: Letters of 1, 8, 14, September 1512.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 94<sup>r</sup>-5<sup>r</sup>: Dieci to Francesco Guicciardini, 24 September 1512.

<sup>86</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xv, coll. 53, 101: Letters to Piero da Bibbiena, 31 August and 16 September 1512.

<sup>87</sup> 'Trionfo della fama e della gloria', *Trionfi*, ed. R. Brusciagli, i, pp. 74-6; Trexler, *Public Life*, p. 508.

<sup>88</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I, 360, f. 29<sup>r</sup>: Jacopo Guicciardini to Francesco Guicciardini, 3 September 1512.

<sup>89</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', p. xxx.

or with their 'sedition' to put the city, with an army so nearby, in danger of the sack.<sup>90</sup> To supporters of popular government, such as Valori, Nardi, and Cerretani, those involved in Soderini's overthrow could only have been moved by 'ambition and avarice'.<sup>91</sup> Thus it was that Cerretani described how some had been moved by age, some by private and public debts, some by the desire to 'live with that license that they desired', some to enrich themselves with the possessions of others, and several to 'make a prince thinking to govern him and all the city'.<sup>92</sup> The same sentiments, that only vice could explain the desire to overthrow the liberty of popular government, lay behind Guicciardini's accusation that Valori and Vettori had been moved by debts incurred as a result of their overspending.<sup>93</sup>

Valori had been an official of the *Monte* in 1508, a sign of his wealth,<sup>94</sup> and in accusing them of profligacy, Guicciardini reveals the moral context of his account. But there were other reasons, as we have seen, for which contemporaries concluded that Paolo Vettori had been moved by the desire to escape financial difficulties. His brother, Francesco, advised him to counter this, and in so doing demonstrates emphatically how conspirators could seek to justify their deeds with claims other than that they had been moved by love of their country, and for other purposes than to declare them glorious.

The charge that Paolo had been moved by financial difficulties was a damaging one, and appears to have been made by the Soderini on their return to the city in April 1513. Francesco told him that he could only remedy that judgement with words, which meant 'none other than to deceive'. He needed to show that he had had 'just causes of enmity' with members of the Soderini family, 'and those that are not, to fake them'. Paolo was instructed to show that the cause of his financial difficulties had been Piero Soderini who 'was seeking every way to have you ruined'. That he had appeared close to Soderini, he was to explain, was because 'attending to your own business and to the city, you wanted to free yourself from suspicion, but not to

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<sup>90</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 17<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>91</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 47; Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 454. See also Giannotti, *Repubblica fiorentina*, pp. 148-9.

<sup>92</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 442. See also *Ibid.*, p. 396.

<sup>93</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 231. See also *Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>94</sup> Appendix A, iii.

be unfaithful to him, because you saved him',<sup>95</sup> a reference perhaps to Paolo's apparent role in preventing Albizzi from taking Soderini's life during the coup.<sup>96</sup> Paolo was to tell this version of events to those he thought were supporters of Soderini or the popular government. To supporters of the Medici however, he was to show that he had 'never desired anything other' than the Medici's return. In this way, Francesco hoped, Paolo would be able to mitigate the desire of supporters of popular government to persecute him for his role in the events of 1512, and at the same time to reap the full rewards for it, in terms of the favour and protection of the Medici. 'Words greatly justify men' Francesco told him, 'but it is necessary to choose with whom they are spoken'.<sup>97</sup>

Paolo was to justify his actions not in terms of benefiting the city, but in terms of just enmity and loyal service to a particular family that were inadmissible and condemnable in Alamanni's poetry. The reason for the difference, was the separate spheres of public life with which they dealt, and in which they took place. Public life on one level was the relationship between the citizen and the city, defined by notions of civic virtue. Thus when conspirators addressed the city, in examinations, poems and political tracts, they sought to justify their deeds in terms of civic virtue. However, public life on another level, that addressed by Vettori, involved the relationship not between citizens and the city, but between the citizens themselves. On this level, conspiracy could be explained and justified in terms of the notions of just enmity and loyal service that defined the relationships between citizens.

Thus Filippo Strozzi had no difficulty in emphasizing to Buondelmonti and Alamanni not only his desire to be a good citizen inspired by classical literature, but also his 'just anger', as Segni described it, and desire to avenge the way in which Clement had treated him by breaking the truce, endangering his life and leaving him as a prisoner at the discretion of the Viceroy.<sup>98</sup> To assure them of his commitment to the overthrow of the Medici, Strozzi wrote that 'I desire more than ever to show as

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<sup>95</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I., 136, f. 219<sup>r</sup>: Francesco to Paolo Vettori, 5 August 1513.

<sup>96</sup> 'Raccolto delle azioni', pp. 268-9.

<sup>97</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I., 136, f. 219<sup>r</sup>: Francesco to Paolo Vettori, 5 August 1513.

<sup>98</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 11.

soon as I can to who has not respected me that I am worth very little, but not however, so little that I should have been treated in such a way'.<sup>99</sup> If his circumstances improved, he assured them, he would recognize it to have been worked 'by chance, and not by the faith or love of men', reminding himself 'in any event, that I have been played with without any respect, as if I was a slave'.<sup>100</sup> Similarly, when Guicciardini wrote to the Pope at the beginning of the siege he proclaimed himself ready to do whatever was asked of him in benefit of the campaign against the government of the last republic because therein lay the 'exaltation of our lord Pope and of his family, the benefit of his servants and the utility of the city'.<sup>101</sup>

To supporters of popular government, those such as Bartolomeo Valori who joined and aided the imperial forces during the siege were fighting 'against the city', an act 'as wicked as one has ever heard of any iniquitous and perverse citizen'.<sup>102</sup> A notification against one such citizen in 1530 described him as a 'wicked traitor to his country', and declared that men should 'sooner wish to die than act against their country' to which 'everyone is as naturally obliged as to their father and mother'.<sup>103</sup> 'The devil entered a scoundrel', Cambi recorded of Lorenzo Soderini in 1530, who planned 'to betray his country in favour of the Pope' on account of his 'ambition' to be the leading member of the Soderini family.<sup>104</sup>

Soderini himself claimed, as opponents of the popular government before 1512 had done, to have been moved by the desire to save his country from destruction. According to Varchi, Soderini told his examiners that he had acted 'with good zeal and in benefit of the city, afraid that if it was taken by force, it would go to the sack'.<sup>105</sup> However, those who joined the imperialist forces during the siege also

<sup>99</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 99, f. 21<sup>r</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Zanobi Buondelmonti and Battista della Palla, 30 January 1527.

<sup>100</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 99, ff. 20<sup>v</sup>-21<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>101</sup> Rossi, *Guicciardini*, i, pp. 286, 287: Letter to Giovanbattista Sanga, 30 September 1529.

<sup>102</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 66, f. 18<sup>v</sup>: Lorenzo Tosinghi to Ceccotto Tosinghi, 4 November 1529; 'chosa tanto scelerata quanto si sentissi mai di cittadino niuno iniquo et perverso'.

<sup>103</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Notificazioni e Querele, I, f. 38<sup>r</sup> (June 1530): 'uno scelerato traditore alla patria ... della quale ciascuno e naturalmente quanto al padre et alla madre obligato ... volere piùpresto morire che fare contro la patria'.

<sup>104</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxiii, p. 63.

<sup>105</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 315.



made another claim, not made by those who had conspired against the popular government before 1512: that they were aiming to free the city from tyranny. In September 1529 the Pope issued bans declaring that he was making war on the city 'to readmit the noble citizens into Florence, and to free the city from the tyrannical government that under the name of *popolo* and *libertà* was usurping all the public authority.'<sup>106</sup> Ughi records that at the height of the siege Florentines fighting with the imperial forces beneath the city walls used to shout to those defending them that they were 'better citizens than them, and that they sought to lift away the multitude of popular tyrants'.<sup>107</sup>

It was because the popular government of the last republic was 'tyrannical and destructive of the country' that Guicciardini could justify to himself his support for the Pope, despite his belief that to support the Medici was to support the establishment of tyranny. This he could agree with Machiavelli was a 'shameful act', but it became an excusable one, as he wrote in the *Considerations*, if, as during the siege, it was done in order to save oneself from persecution from what was itself a tyrannical regime:<sup>108</sup>

sometimes the forms of liberty are so disordered, and cities so full of civil discords, that necessity drives some citizen, unable to save himself by other means, to seek tyranny or to support someone who seeks it. Those who put love of their country before their personal safety in these circumstances would be more praiseworthy; but because this love or this fortitude is more often desired than found in men, those who are moved by such a cause deserve to be much excused, and so much more so if the government against which they act is disordered, because many things are often called liberty which are not so.

Guicciardini's remark reveals how instrumental it was for those who attempted to overthrow the regime to be able to justify their actions and declare them honourable. On occasion the notion that there was no more glorious act than to risk one's life for the liberty of the city and the benefit of the *patria* may have even played a fundamental role in plots. Guicciardini argued that the majority of those few enemies of tyrants who were moved by love of liberty, were moved not so much for

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<sup>106</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 216.

<sup>107</sup> Ughi, 'Cronica', p. 156.

<sup>108</sup> F. Guicciardini, 'Considerazioni', I, xvi, *Scritti politici*, p. 19.

that as because 'knowing this defence to be most glorious, they have sought with this means to acquire name and glory; and thus they come to have been moved not for the common good, but for the purposes of their own interests'.<sup>109</sup> Cosimo Rucellai, the friend and companion of Buondelmonti and the other conspirators of 1522 from the Rucellai gardens,<sup>110</sup> had written a sonnet about Brutus before his death in 1519 extolling how 'this example alone' was such to be the reason that the world still derived some 'drop' from the 'holy river of Justice'.<sup>111</sup> There were purposes for which conspirators in 1513 and 1522 claimed to have been inspired by the glory of Brutus, but some contemporaries did believe that they had been moved by the desire for glory.

Nardi, for example, believed della Robbia's claim that Boscoli confessed that his 'studies' had 'swelled' his mind with the glory of tyrannicide, inspiring him to follow Brutus.<sup>112</sup> Nerli wrote of how the conspirators of 1522 had been inspired by their study of history to 'imitate the ancients' by 'working some great thing that might make them illustrious' and thus they had decided plot against the Cardinal to re-establish the 'free government' and restore 'liberty' to the 'popolo' as before 1512.<sup>113</sup> Cerretani concluded that the plotters had been moved more by the 'vanity of glory' than by hatred for the Cardinal, and appears to have done so partly on account of a remark in da Diacceto's confession. Da Diacceto related that Buondelmonti had wanted to include in the plot Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, one of the leaders of Soderini's overthrow. Alamanni had refused to countenance this, saying 'he is a traitor, let us keep all this honour for ourselves'.<sup>114</sup> The Ferrarese ambassador had similarly concluded in 1481 that one of the conspirators, Amorotto Baldovinetti, had been moved solely by the desire for 'immortal glory'.<sup>115</sup> To the extent that these plots

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<sup>109</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Dialogo*, p. 40.

<sup>110</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, pp. 85-6; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 405.

<sup>111</sup> H. Hauvette, 'Les poesies de Cosimo Rucellai et de Francesco Guidetti', *Annales de la Faculté des Lettres de Bordeaux*, Ser. 4, *Bulletin Italien*, iv (1904), p. 89. See also Dionisotti, *Machiavellerie*, p. 148.

<sup>112</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 27.

<sup>113</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 138.

<sup>114</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 407.

<sup>115</sup> Capelli, 'Lettere', p. 254.

were moved by the desire for glory, the ancient doctrine of tyrannicide provided not only the justification but the inspiration for conspiracy against the Medici.

Where they were not fundamental however, the notions that it was legitimate and laudable to plot against the regime in order to restore liberty to the city and benefit the *patria* were instrumental to conspiracies. For plots depended on the ability of conspirators to justify their attempts to overthrow the regime and declare them good. The best illustration of that is the extent to which the praiseworthiness of conspiracy was questioned from within the ranks of the discontented themselves. That was particularly the case amongst supporters of republican liberty during the Medicean regime.

Machiavelli for example, noted in the third book of the *Discourses* the consequences of the failure of the Pazzi conspiracy to assassinate both Giuliano and Lorenzo in 1478. He concluded that since conspiracies against more than one prince were bound to fail, and since their failure would lead, as it had in 1478, to a prince becoming more 'intolerable' and more 'harsh', men should abstain from plotting against more than one prince because 'it does no good either to oneself or to one's country (*patria*)'.<sup>116</sup> Following his examination of the Pazzi plot in his *Florentine Histories*, Machiavelli wrote that since conspiracies so rarely succeeded, they most often brought 'ruin to who ever moves them and greatness to the one against whom they are moved', and often indeed turned a good prince into a bad one.<sup>117</sup> Machiavelli commended in the *Discourses* the 'golden' sentence of Tacitus that men should desire good princes, but should tolerate them if they were not, for 'whoever does otherwise will more often than not ruin both himself and his country'.<sup>118</sup>

Much effort has been exerted in attempting to show that Machiavelli either did not believe his 'golden' sentence or did not intend to sanction tyranny with it.<sup>119</sup> But it is clear that Machiavelli did wish to point out the dangers involved in plots against a prince both to oneself and one's country, and that in so doing he was questioning the ancient classical doctrine of tyrannicide with which conspirators

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<sup>116</sup> Machiavelli, 'Discorsi', III, vi, *Opere* (1954), p. 334.

<sup>117</sup> Idem, 'Istorie fiorentine', VIII, i, *Opere* (1954), pp. 923-4.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p. 320.

<sup>119</sup> Schellhase, *Tacitus*, pp. 72-82.

against the Medici justified their deeds. Alamanno Rinuccini for example, had praised the Pazzi conspiracy at the time as an attempt to restore liberty to the city, and thus 'a glorious deed' and 'worthy of the highest praise', which should be 'praised forever'.<sup>120</sup> Machiavelli by contrast, while he agreed that those who succeeded in restoring liberty to their country were worthy of the highest praise, questioned the worth of attempting to do so when the chances of success were so slim, and the costs of failure to oneself and one's country so high.

It is less well-known that other Florentines also questioned the value of tyrannicide on the grounds that it often did more harm than good to the city. It was partly on this account that Francesco Vettori condemned Brutus in 1528, some years before Giannotti was to do so more famously in the 1540s. Vettori noted that Brutus and Cassius were often given as inspirational examples of men moved by love of the liberty of their country, but argued that these were 'fables to be told at the fireside', for Brutus and Cassius were moved to conspire, just as Florentines were, 'by ambition' and self-interest.<sup>121</sup> He condemned them because on account of their 'ambition', it had not concerned them to 'turn the world upside down' and have Rome become the 'slave of so many cruel tyrants' and 'bestial men' who ruled the city after Ceasar's death.<sup>122</sup>

Guicciardini warned in the 1520s that one could do nothing 'more pernicious' to a city under a tyranny, than to give the tyrant cause for suspicion, and thus force him to become worse.<sup>123</sup> When a citizen was made 'great', Guicciardini wrote, 'the city does not have to be obliged to those who attempt new things against him without good occasion, because it increases the suspicion, and from that the evils of tyranny'.<sup>124</sup> Guicciardini often warned that whatever the intention behind them, plots rarely succeeded in benefiting the city. Those who overthrew regimes, he instructed his sons, were never able to ensure that the new government was established

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<sup>120</sup> A. Rinuccini, 'Dialogus de libertate', ed. F. Adorno, *Atti e memorie dell' accademia toscana di scienze e lettere: La colombaria*, xxii (1957), p. 273: 'facinus gloriosissimum et omni laude celebrandum ... perpetuo laudabitur'.

<sup>121</sup> Vettori, *Scritti*, p. 281.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 282.

<sup>123</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Dialogo*, p. 83.

<sup>124</sup> *Idem*, *Scritti politici*, p. 244: 'Ricordi', B. 22.

according to their design, and thus when the city had a 'tolerable regime', although with some 'defects', one should not attempt to overthrow it 'to have a better one, because almost always it worsens.'<sup>125</sup> Whether they lived in a free city, an oligarchy or under prince, they should be content if they had a reasonable position, for otherwise 'you will cause trouble for yourselves, and sometimes for the city'.<sup>126</sup>

Guicciardini believed, like Machiavelli, that while it was praiseworthy in principle to attempt to overthrow the regime to restore liberty to the city and benefit the *patria*, it was hardly ever so in practice, for such attempts hardly ever succeeded, and their failure did more harm to the city than good. There were others in Florence who believed that even in principle it was not justified for an individual to attempt to overthrow the government. This was a belief held by many followers of Savonarola during the Medici regime, and was neatly expressed by Luca Landucci in his *Diary* following his account of the *parlamento* of 1512:<sup>127</sup>

everyone should be content with that which Divine Goodness permits, because all governments and lordships are from God, and if in these revolutions there should happen some penury, damage, expense or discomfort to the *popolo*, consider that it is for our sins and to the end of some greater good.

Girolamo Benivieni is reported to have told Cardinal Giulio that although he was a supporter of Savonarola and thus desired the restoration of liberty to the city, he would never commit 'treason' (*fellonia*) on that account or attempt to overthrow the regime by force but rather 'pray well to God' and the Cardinal that 'it be conceded'.<sup>128</sup> It has recently been asserted that few *piagnoni* shared such passive beliefs, and that the majority of Savonarola's supporters, inspired by the friar's own teaching, refused to accept that the Medici should be endured for God's love, and worked actively against them.<sup>129</sup> Della Robbia, as we have seen, was one *piagnone*

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid.: 'Ricordi', B. 21.

<sup>126</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Scritti politici*, p. 322: 'Ricordi', C. 169. See also Idem, *Dialogo*, pp. 83-4.

<sup>127</sup> Landucci, *Diario*, p. 329: 'Ogniuno debbe essere contento a quello che permette la Divina bontà, perchè tutti gli stati e Signori sono da Dio, e se in questi mutamenti di stati ci accade qualche penuria, danno o ispesa o disagio del popolo, stima ch'egli è pe' nostri peccati a fine di qualche maggiore bene'.

<sup>128</sup> Pitti, 'Istoria', p. 123.

<sup>129</sup> Polizzotto, 'Medici', pp. 141-2.

who did believe that since the Medici were usurpers, it was justified and praiseworthy to attempt to overthrow them to restore the city's liberty, as Boscoli had done. Yet his source was Aquinas rather than Savonarola. Most *piagnoni* seem to have believed, as Landucci and Benivieni did, that since tyrannical government was a punishment from God, the Medici should be endured until God saw fit to remove them, and in this they followed the teachings of Savonarola himself.

In his sermons and writings Savonarola had taught that for a Christian, 'tyrannical government is permitted by God to punish and purge the sins of the people', and would be removed by God once those sins were purged.<sup>130</sup> On one occasion he did declare that it was the office of the *popolo*, where it was lord, to banish the tyrant, but based on St. Paul's famous injunction to the effect that since powers were ordained by God they should be obeyed in every matter that was not against God, Savonarola denied that it was legitimate for any 'private individual' to kill a tyrant, for that would be to act against God.<sup>131</sup> Savonarola's followers sustained themselves with his words that the popular government would be remade if it was ever harmed, and during the *Tumulto*, according to Varchi, they thanked God for 'miraculously' freeing the city from 'servitude' as Savonarola had prophesied He would,<sup>132</sup> but they believed that individuals should wait for such a miracle rather than actively attempt to overthrow the Medici. Far from providing the justification for opposition to the Medici, as has been claimed, most Savonarolans believed that it was wrong to plot against the Medici, and this was probably the main reason why they were not, as we have seen, at the forefront of opposition to the Medici regime. Indeed it was because 'their confidence is more in miracles than in anything else' that Lodovico Alamanni assured the Medici in 1516 that they should hold little account of the 'sect of the friar', who were to be feared only for their 'votes' and not their 'arms'.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> G. Savonarola, *Trattato del reggimento e governo della città di Firenze*, ed. G. Pella and G. Lapira (Turin, 1954), p. 29; Weinstein, *Savonarola*, p. 154.

<sup>131</sup> Savonarola, *Amos e Zaccaria*, i, pp. 150-1.

<sup>132</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 109.

<sup>133</sup> L. Alamanni, 'Discorso', ed. Albertini, *Staatsbewusstsein*, p. 366.

Both the Machiavellian idea that attempts to restore liberty to the city were not praiseworthy in practice, and the Savonarolan notion that they were unjustified in principle, meant that some supporters of popular government not only rejected conspiracy for themselves but were also critical of those who did attempt to overthrow the Medici. Niccolò Valori for example, one of the few *piagnoni* involved in plots against the Medici, records that he had sought to discourage Boscoli in 1513 partly because he 'did not like violence', and that he had warned Boscoli that the city 'abhors the spilling of blood'.<sup>134</sup> The plot of 1522 was vehemently condemned by Giovanni Cambi, another follower of Savonarola, as an act of 'cruelty and madness', motivated solely by the 'little' causes of resentment the conspirators felt for the Cardinal, rather than the desire to free their country.<sup>135</sup> Cambi noted that their plan to raise a revolt came at a time when the price of grain was high and the silk trade was at a standstill due to the war with France, and concluded that the plotters were 'so insolent and wicked', that for the 'little cause of their resentment' they desired to put their country at risk of the sack.<sup>136</sup> Cerretani, also a *piagnone*, believed the plot had been moved mainly by the desire to free the city from the 'servitude' of the Medici, but he warned that 'every power comes from God', and noted that if popular government had been restored, the city would have immediately allied itself to France, which would have resulted in its 'ruin', for France was to be comprehensively defeated by the Spanish that summer.<sup>137</sup>

It was the *Tumulto del Venerdì* however, which was to be most roundly condemned by supporters of popular government, and in terms not dissimilar to those used by the regime. The *Otto di Pratica* wrote to the Florentine ambassador in Venice of how the young men responsible 'had not been concerned that the city, surrounded by three armies, might be subjected to fire and the sack, as long as they might vent their anger', and had proceeded to compel the *Signoria* 'as dishonestly as was ever done for two hundred years'.<sup>138</sup> Supporters of popular government were to

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<sup>134</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>135</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 202-3.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 203-4.

<sup>137</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 408.

<sup>138</sup> A.S.F., *Otto di Pratica*, Missive, 18, f. 158<sup>r</sup>: Letter to Alessandro de' Pazzi, 29 April 1527.

make similar criticisms. Nardi supported the revolt but condemned the violence directed at the *Signoria*,<sup>139</sup> and he and Guicciardini agreed that day that although they desired the restoration of liberty the revolt was 'a great madness' that endangered the city with the sack.<sup>140</sup> Diarists and chroniclers condemned the revolt as an 'ugly matter' and the young nobles as 'madmen' (*matti, pazzi*) for putting the city in danger of the sack from the armies outside it.<sup>141</sup> 'It was not the time to do such a thing', the young nobles are recorded to have been told by those who encouraged them to accept an amnesty in return for leaving the Palace, to which they initially replied that they 'would rather die than live under tyrants and the house of the Medici'.<sup>142</sup>

Such criticism of attempts to overthrow the regime from within the ranks of the discontented serves to emphasize the instrumental role in plots of the notions of republican civic virtue with which conspirators were able to assert the legitimacy and glory of their actions. Such assertions were to become far less easy to make in the years after 1530 when Florence ceased to be a republic. The charge that the Medici had usurped the liberty of the city could be countered by the Medici Dukes with the claim to be princes with a legitimate title granted by the Emperor. In an attempt to overcome that, Lorenzino was driven in 1537 to assert the right of a private individual to assassinate a tyrant with a legitimate title.<sup>143</sup> In so doing he adopted the most radical, and hitherto unnoticed, position on tyrannicide put forward in Europe since Luca da Penna, the fourteenth century civilist. It was to be another thirty years before Buchanan brought the Protestant Reformation to an unequivocal statement that the right to kill or remove a tyrant with a legal title lay with every individual citizen.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 133-4; Idem, 'Lettera', p. 136.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

<sup>141</sup> Anonymous, 'Memorie del seguito nella città di Firenze dal 1524 al 1530', B.N.F., F.P., II, IV, 404, ff. 129<sup>r</sup>-30<sup>v</sup>; Anon., 'Diario, 1521-1532', ff. 17<sup>r-v</sup>; Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 187<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>142</sup> Anon., 'Diario, 1521-1532', f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>143</sup> L. de' Medici, *Scritti e documenti*, ed. C. Teoli (Milan, 1862), p. 6. If Alessandro had been as legitimate a prince as the King of France, Lorenzino argued, his 'dissolute life, his avarice and his cruelty' made him a tyrant and justified his murder.

<sup>144</sup> Jászi and Lewis, *Against the Tyrant*, pp. 25, 53.



Despite Lorenzino's efforts there was a growing doubt amongst supporters of republican liberty in the two or three decades after 1530 that it was right to attempt to overthrow the Medici. An abiding theme of Florentine historians in the mid-sixteenth century, such as Benedetto Varchi, was that plots against the Medici in the past had only ever served, as they had in 1478, 1513 and 1522, to increase the Medici's greatness.<sup>145</sup> The Machiavellian warning against attempts to restore liberty to the city on the grounds that they were bound to do more harm than good, combined with a Tacitean belief that destiny had ushered in the Medici, and that the age for the Florentine republic was over. Thus even an exiled supporter of republican liberty, such as Giannotti, began to wonder whether it was right for the individual to intervene in the process of history as tyrannicides did. If there were to be fewer plots against Duke Cosimo I than against his predecessors in the early sixteenth century, this was one reason why.

It was their decision to plot against the regime, rather than their discontent, which distinguished conspirators. Yet there was a clear potential for conspiracy within the common Florentine assumptions and beliefs regarding the utility and legitimacy of attempting to overthrow the regime, and it was out of that potential that plots emerged. It was common currency in Florence that it was 'madness' to conspire against the regime, since it was bound to end in the ruin of those involved. Nevertheless, Florentines were generally agreed on the self-interested reasons, including the desire for glory, for which it might be worth risking one's life to plot against the regime.

Conspirators claimed to have been moved by love of liberty to free the city from tyranny, or love of their country to save it from destruction. In doing so they sought to justify their deeds and declare them legitimate and praiseworthy by appealing to what were generally accepted notions of civic virtue and the legitimacy of tyrannicide. These notions were instrumental to plots, and every conspiracy depended upon them. To the extent that conspirators against the Medici were ever moved by the desire for glory, as some contemporaries believed they were, the

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<sup>145</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 51.

doctrine of tyrannicide even played a fundamental role in plots, providing not only their justification but their inspiration.

That doctrine was not unquestioned from within the ranks of the discontented. There were those such as followers of Savonarola who believed that tyrannical government should be endured as a punishment from God, and that belief was the main reason why Savonarolans were not at the forefront of opposition to the Medici. Plots against the Medici were the work of supporters of popular government or an aristocratic republic guided by the traditional values of Florentine republicanism rather than by Savonarola's vision of a godly republic because it was those values and not Savonarola that provided a justification for opposition to the Medici. There were also those, of whom Machiavelli was only one, who argued that tyrannicide was hardly ever praiseworthy in practice, and counselled against attempts to restore liberty to the city. That argument was to hold increasing sway in the decades after 1530, and conspiracy was to become less frequent as a result.

## Part Three

# The Anatomy of Opposition

## Insiders and Outsiders

Almost all plots in early sixteenth-century Florence were the work of patricians. Most of those involved, as Table One shows, whether against the popular government or the Medici, were noble, in that their families were magnates, or had entered the Priorate before 1350.<sup>1</sup> This is a precise date for what was in truth an imprecise distinction between those major guild families who were 'new' (*di fresco*) and those who were 'ancient' (*popolani antichi*), whom with magnates, (*uomini di famiglie*), were agreed to compose the nobility in Florence.<sup>2</sup> Magnate families were banned from communal office in the late thirteenth century, and can therefore be identified, but no particular year of entry marked off the *popolani antichi* who were *nobili*, from other major guild families who were not, and their distinction lay only in the recognition of their exalted status by their peers and the *popolani* below them. Where we have them however, contemporary descriptions of the social status of those involved in conspiracies confirm that almost all plots were the work of the nobility. Only the conspiracy of 1497 could not be said to have been mainly the work of those from noble families, in that a small majority of its members were either from new families in the major guilds, or from the minor guilds.

All conspiracies were the work of prominent citizens or those from prominent families in that most of those involved in each plot had either held important political office, or were the sons of those who had.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, as Table Two shows, about half

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<sup>1</sup> On this see Martines, *Lawyers*, pp. 64-6; Butters, *Governors*, pp. 4-9; Pesman Cooper, 'Florentine Ruling Group', pp. 87-9; D. Kent, *The Rise of the Medici. Faction in Florence 1426-1434* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 114-118.

<sup>2</sup> Piero Guicciardini in Rubinstein, *Government*, pp. 322-3.

<sup>3</sup> Important political office has been defined as the *Signoria*, Twelve Good Men, Sixteen Gonfaloniers of the Companies, *Otto di Guardia*, *Dieci di Balìa*, *Otto di Pratica*, Captains of the Guelf Party, Officials of the *Monte*, Seventeen Reformers, Twelve Procurators, and *Accoppiatori*.

of those involved in most plots were leading citizens or from leading families, in that either they or their fathers had held positions in the inner circles of the regime, in the *Dieci di Balìa*, the *Otto di Pratica*, the *Accoppiatori* and the Council of Seventy, or had been called to speak in *pratiche* on their own behalf.<sup>4</sup>

Table One

Social Background of Conspirators

	Nobles	Major Guilds	Minor Guilds	Other	Total
1497	13	13	3	1	30
1510	1	0	0	0	1
August 1512	14	2	0	0	16
Sept. 1512	22	8	3	0	33
1513	4	1	0	0	5
1522	12	3	0	1	16
1526/7	5	0	0	0	5
February 1527	3	3	0	0	6
April 1527	32	13	0	0	45
Total	106	43	6	2	157

Sources: See Appendix A, i-xi.

As Table Two shows, the overthrow of Soderini in 1512 was almost entirely the work of those from leading families, as was the plot of Filippo Strozzi and others against the Medici in 1526/7. These were two plots that sought the establishment of a regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant, but the extent to which those from leading families were involved in all plots, including those such as 1497 which aimed to re-establish the past regime, show that the different aims of conspiracies did not reflect any significant difference in the social and political backgrounds of those involved. There are some distinctions to be made, as we shall see, between the social and political backgrounds of the leaders of different plots. Yet all conspiracies, whether intended to establish an aristocratic regime, re-establish the Medici regime,

<sup>4</sup> On this see Martines, *Lawyers*, p. 388; Brucker, *Civic World*, pp. 264-5; Pesman Cooper, 'Florentine Ruling Group', pp. 99-104; Kent, *Rise*, pp. 109-113.

or restore the popular regime, were generally the work of the same group: those from noble families of some political prominence, often the leading families in the city.

Table Two

Political Background of Conspirators

	Inner Circles	Prominent Office	No Office	Unknown	Total
1497	14	10	4	2	30
1510	1	0	0	0	1
August 1512	13	3	0	0	16
Sept. 1512	9	15	6	3	33
1513	2	1	2	0	5
1522	8	4	3	1	16
1526-7	4	1	0	0	5
February 1527	2	4	0	0	6
April 1527	17	21	6	1	45
Total	70	59	21	7	157

Sources: See Appendix A, i-xi.

It was men from those same leading noble families who were at the head of the *Tumulto del Venerdì* in April 1527. This was a popular revolt, in which the 'popolo' participated,<sup>5</sup> but at the forefront of the *Tumulto* were young men from the city's leading noble families, and those forty or so individuals who most distinguished themselves in the revolt, as the tables show, were also almost all from prominent or leading families of the city, just as those who conspired against popular government had been. It was these same families who had conspired against the Medici in the fifteenth century and were responsible for their overthrow in 1494.

Political conflict in Florence in the early sixteenth century was thus not the conflict between *ottimati* on the one hand and the Medici or popular government on

<sup>5</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXXVI, n. 80: Fabrizio Peregrino to Alessandro de' Medici, 27 April 1527; A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1109, f. 312<sup>v</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 26 April 1527; Anon., 'Diario, 1521-32', f. 17<sup>v</sup>; Anon., 'Cronica', f. 155<sup>f</sup>; Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 187<sup>v</sup>; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, coll.

the other. Rather it was the conflict between the *ottimati* themselves, between those from the city's principal families, as it had been since the two or three decades following the Ciompi revolt of 1378. Moreover, to the extent that most plots sought the re-establishment of the past regime, political conflict in Florence was mostly the conflict between those patricians who supported popular government as it existed under Soderini in 1512 and those patricians who desired a party-based regime with the Medici as party bosses.

The main distinction between conspirators that was reflected in their different aims was not the socio-political group from which they came, but whether they were in or out of power. Those plots that sought to establish a regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant were the work of discontented former supporters of the regime. In most cases they or their fathers were prominent or leading members of the regime which they sought to overthrow. Most plots by contrast were the work of those who had always desired the restoration of the past regime. In many cases they or their fathers had been prominent or leading citizens of the past regime which they sought to re-establish, and excluded from the ruling circles of the regime which they sought to overthrow. Others shared long-standing bonds of loyalty to the deposed leaders of the past regime. Most plots were thus the work of those who had been thrown out of power.

This has not been recognized before. Indeed, even in the cases of particular conspiracies there has been no systematic examination of the social and political background of conspirators, nor of their political careers, nor of the ties of association between them. Yet it is clear that as most plots sought the re-establishment of the past regime, so most plots were the work of members of the past regime and their loyal supporters, excluded from the present. And with the restoration of the past regime, most plots sought in turn the exclusion and persecution of the leading members of the regime they sought to overthrow. They sought revenge. That was as much the case with plots that sought the re-establishment of the

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581, 590; L. Guicciardini, 'Sacco', pp. 138-9, 141, 148; Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 8; F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, v, pp. 131-2; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 104-106, 111.

popular regime, many of whose members were to be leading *arrabbiati* in the last republic, as it was of plots that sought the return of the Medici.

Francesco Vettori was a victim of this exclusion and persecution in the last republic and he concluded in 1528 that no one in Florence thought to a 'free government' (*vivere libero*), but only to their own 'utility' (*utile*). Political conflict in Florence, Vettori wrote, was still the conflict between 'factions' (*parti ed fazioni*) over honours and office, as it had been for two hundred years; between that faction that had all the honours and office, and that faction that had none. 'The dominion is not so great, nor the revenues so many, that they can feed everyone; and so one part feeds itself and the other is discontented and awaits the time to do the same'.<sup>6</sup> Florence could never have a stable republic, Vettori argued, and he was well-known for doing so,<sup>7</sup> unless the dominion and revenues increased, or the number of citizens halved.<sup>8</sup>

Almost all plots after 1494 were the work to some extent of those who had been thrown out of power and their loyal supporters, and some plots wholly so. In that sense the nature of political conflict in Florence in the early sixteenth century was, as Vettori recognized, part of a long tradition of factional conflict in Florence that stretched back to the early fourteenth century and beyond.<sup>9</sup> It was a marked change from the fifteenth century however, when after attempts in the 1440s by the banished Albizzi to return to the city, most plots against the Medici, including that of 1478,<sup>10</sup> were the work of disgruntled former supporters of the regime.

Thus the conflict between supporters of popular government and supporters of the Medici that was to account for most plots after 1494 was a conflict between those in power and those they had thrown out of power. It was a conflict that in some respects dated back to the earliest decades of the Medici regime in the fifteenth century and even to the conflicts that preceded the rise of the Medici in 1434. Some

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<sup>6</sup> Vettori, *Scritti*, p. 281; Idem, 'Sommaro', p. 293.

<sup>7</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 295.

<sup>8</sup> Vettori, *Scritti*, p. 281.

<sup>9</sup> J. Heers, *Parties and Political Life in the Medieval West*, trans. D. Nicholas (Oxford-New York-Amsterdam, 1977), pp. 54-78.

<sup>10</sup> Machiavelli, *Lettere*, pp. 271-2: Filippo Casavecchia to Niccolò Machiavelli, 30 July 1507, makes this point concerning the events of both 1466 and 1478.



of the supporters of popular government or the Medici involved in plots after 1494 were descendants of those who had opposed or supported the Medici in 1434 and the decades to follow.

For the most part however, the conflict after 1494 between supporters of popular government and supporters of the Medici first originated in the last years of the Medici regime in the fifteenth century, concerning the increasing predominance of the Medici and particularly of Piero. It was in 1494 that it first erupted. Those long-standing supporters of the Medici who conspired against the popular government had either loyally supported the Medici until their overthrow in 1494 and desired their return ever since, or were the sons of those who had. In the cases of most of those supporters of popular government involved in plots and other attacks against the Medici after 1512, either they or their fathers had been supporters of the Medici but had opposed them in 1494, had remained implacably opposed to the return of the Medici until 1512, and had sought the restoration of the popular government ever since.

The conspiracy of 1497 provides the most well-documented example of a plot by those thrown out of power and their loyal supporters, although the political careers of the conspirators and the bonds of loyalty they shared with Piero have been ignored in the only modern account of the plot.<sup>11</sup> Of the twenty-seven Florentines known to have been involved whose careers are known, eleven had held office under the Medici, and of those eleven, ten had held no office in the popular regime before the conspiracy.<sup>12</sup> Bernardo del Nero, Gonfalonier at the time of the plot, was the only conspirator to have held office after 1494. Indeed having sat in the *Dieci*, and been

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<sup>11</sup> Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, pp. 9-11.

<sup>12</sup> Appendix A, i. The condemnations of those involved are not extant, but lists of those condemned can be found in chronicle accounts. The fullest, and that which I have used, can be found in Cei, 'Storia', ff. 52<sup>r</sup>-59<sup>r</sup>. See also Landucci, *Diario*, pp. 156-8; Sanudo, *Diarii*, i, coll. 711, 726, 759, 802; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, pp. 109, 114; Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 212; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 139; T. Ginori, 'Libro di debitori e creditori e ricordanze', ed. J. Schnitzer, *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte Savonarolas*, i (Munich, 1902), p. 101; Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 239; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 72.

one of the *Paciali* appointed in 1497, del Nero was a leading member of the inner circles of the regime he was attempting to overthrow.<sup>13</sup>

Three of those conspirators who held no office after 1494, Piero Alamanni, Filippo dell' Antella and Niccolò Ridolfi, one of the executed leaders of the plot, had sat in the Seventy, and thus had been members of the inner circle of the Medici regime, as del Nero had been. Indeed, Ridolfi and Alamanni had both been, with del Nero, amongst the leading members of the Medicean regime before 1494, having been in the *Accoppiatori* and the *Otto di Pratica*.<sup>14</sup> Both are reported with del Nero to have been amongst the nine individuals in April 1493 with whom Piero was governing the regime,<sup>15</sup> and amongst the twelve members of the 'pratica stretta' with whom Piero was conferring in the summer of 1494.<sup>16</sup> Lorenzo Alamanni, Piero's son, was involved in the plot, and like him, one of the leaders of the conspiracy, Lorenzo Tornabuoni, was the son of a member of the inner circles of the Medici regime who had held no office after 1494. Five other conspirators, including Carlo Gherardi, Francesco Martelli, and Giannozzo Pucci, one of the leaders of the plot, had been prominent but not leading members of the Medicean regime, and having sat in *Signoria* or the *Otto* once or twice after 1490 would have expected further positions had the regime continued. Three of the plotters, including Gherardi, were all to be prominent citizens following the restoration of the Medici to power in 1512, while Martelli, dell' Antella, Alamanni and three others were to be members of the Seventy and in the inner circles of the regime.<sup>17</sup>

The leaders of the plot had all been amongst Piero's closest supporters before 1494 and had remained so until his overthrow. Both Pucci and Lorenzo Tornabuoni were called upon by Piero in late-October to accompany him on his ill-fated mission to treat for peace with the French as they approached Florentine territory.<sup>18</sup> They and another conspirator, Jacopo Gianfigliuzzi, were foremost amongst those 'friends'

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<sup>13</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, pp. 171, 203-4; Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, p. xxvi: Paolo Somenzi to the Duke of Milan, 2 April 1497.

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix A, i.

<sup>15</sup> P. Parenti, *Storia fiorentina*, ed. Matucci, in progress, i (Florence, 1994), pp. 46-7.

<sup>16</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 91.

<sup>17</sup> Appendix A, i.

<sup>18</sup> Parenti, *Storia*, ed. Matucci, i, p. 111.

with Piero when he conceded the fortresses of Pisa and Livorno without an official mandate,<sup>19</sup> and it was Tornabuoni, as one of his ‘companions’, whom Piero sent back to Florence to request that he be given full powers to negotiate on behalf of the city.<sup>20</sup> Outraged both at the concession of the fortresses and the manner in which it was made, leading citizens sent official ambassadors to negotiate with the French. When Piero returned on 8 November to re-establish his authority in the city he was visited by three ‘principal citizens’ two of whom were del Nero and Ridolfi.<sup>21</sup> The next day, according to Parenti, Tornabuoni and Pucci were foremost amongst the ‘friends’ of Piero who were armed and preparing to take control of the city on his behalf.<sup>22</sup> Jacopo Gianfigliuzzi and Francesco Martelli were amongst those in Piero’s company during his unsuccessful attempt to seize the Palace, following which Piero was forced to flee the city.<sup>23</sup>

After the overthrow of Piero, an amnesty was granted to those who had supported him, but it did not reconcile the future conspirators to the popular government, and one reason for that was their inability to find a place in the new regime. According to Guicciardini, Pucci had desired Piero’s return partly because he had seen that he was unable to have much influence in the popular government since he was not from a noble family, and had little ‘favour’ amongst the *popolo* because of the ‘wicked conduct’ of his father.<sup>24</sup> Pucci was excluded partly because his family’s rise had depended solely on Medici favour, and partly because he was too closely associated with the Medici regime. Both Alamanni and Pucci’s father, Antonio, as well as del Nero, according to Guicciardini, had been amongst those without relatives or ‘credit’ given favour by Lorenzo because he did not need to fear them.<sup>25</sup> With del Nero they were both amongst those to whom Lorenzo was giving ‘reputation’, and to whom he entrusted the supervision of scrutinies and taxes, and confided ‘essential secrets’, since they were of a ‘quality’ that without his support

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<sup>19</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 95.

<sup>20</sup> Parenti, *Storia*, ed. Matucci, i, pp. 115, 117.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 124, 126.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.

<sup>24</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 142.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24-5.

they would have had no following.<sup>26</sup> Alamanni, according to Cerretani, was enriched by Lorenzo, and made by him one of most reputed citizens in Florence.<sup>27</sup>

Without nobility or relatives, it was only by means of the Medici, according to Guicciardini, that Pucci's family, Alamanni and del Nero had arisen to a position of political prominence before 1494 equal to those who ordinarily would have preceded them.<sup>28</sup> Evidently however, the position of Pucci and Alamanni remained dependant on the Medici. They lacked those qualities which enabled del Nero, after eighteen months 'banished' from public affairs by the 'great suspicion' in which those who had supported Piero were held, to acquire a position in the popular regime.<sup>29</sup> Due to his old age, wealth, prudence and other qualities, according to Guicciardini, del Nero was of such authority that he came to lead Savonarola's opponents.<sup>30</sup> Yet Guicciardini wondered on more than one occasion whether Bernardo del Nero's distaste for popular government, despite his leading position within it, had not been moved by the 'hurt' (*sdegno*) from some injury done to him during the popular regime, particularly by the many 'dishonest' taxes, that were imposed on him.<sup>31</sup>

Parenti records that Ridolfi was thought by the *popolo* at the time to have disliked the government of the new regime, because 'he himself did not possess it'.<sup>32</sup> Guicciardini argued that since Ridolfi was of noble family and had enjoyed honours, authority and power to be compared to any other citizen of his time, if he had wanted to accommodate himself to the popular government as other leading members of the Medicean regime had done, he would not have lacked 'honours and reputation' in the regime. Yet because he was the father-in-law of Piero's sister, Contessina, and on that account had been extremely powerful in the Medici regime, he had not been

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 78-9.

<sup>27</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 407.

<sup>28</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Dialogo*, p. 11.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>30</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 131, 143.

<sup>31</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Dialogo*, pp. 5, 53; Idem, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 143.

<sup>32</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 209.

content with the position he could have had in the popular government and was moved by 'ambition', according to Guicciardini, to plot.<sup>33</sup>

Tornabuoni was too young to have held office, but his father had been a member of the Seventy before 1494, and had held no office in the popular regime before his death in 1497.<sup>34</sup> Yet according to Guicciardini, Tornabuoni was not moved, as Pucci had been, by any inability to find position in the popular regime. For like Ridolfi and unlike Pucci, Tornabuoni was noble as well as renowned for his virtues, and thus had the 'universal favour and benevolence' of all the *popolo*, indeed more so than anyone else his age,<sup>35</sup> as other contemporaries also recalled.<sup>36</sup> Rather, argued Guicciardini, Tornabuoni was moved, like Ridolfi, partly by the loss of the extraordinary influence he enjoyed under Piero, and partly because of marriage ties with the Medici. Tornabuoni was a close relative and blood cousin of Piero, since his aunt, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, was Piero's grandmother.<sup>37</sup>

It was the strength of their ties to the Medici rather than their exclusion from popular government that moved Ridolfi and Tornabuoni, and indeed it was long-standing bonds of loyalty to the Medici, as Guicciardini recognized, that were the main reason too, for Pucci's involvement in the plot. Pucci was 'wholeheartedly of Piero', on account of his father and his ancestors (his grandfather had been a close supporter of the Medici since before 1434),<sup>38</sup> and through having then been himself Piero's 'companion' (*compagno*).<sup>39</sup> Parenti records that Pucci was thought by the *popolo* at the time to have been moved by the 'benevolence of Piero de' Medici' and by 'habitually being with him'.<sup>40</sup> Piero was to urge Pucci not to forget that 'good friendship' in 'past years', Pucci later recalled, when he sent Fra Mariano to Florence in the summer of 1496 to request Pucci's support for a possible attempt to return to Florence.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 143.

<sup>34</sup> See Appendix, A, i.

<sup>35</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 143.

<sup>36</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 239; Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 130.

<sup>37</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 143; Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 130; Sanudo, *Diarii*, i, col. 725.

<sup>38</sup> Kent, *Rise*, p. 353.

<sup>39</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 142.

<sup>40</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 209.

<sup>41</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I., 360, f. 15<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Giannozzo Pucci.

Unlike the other executed leaders of the plot, Giovanni Cambi was neither a leading citizen, as were Ridolfi and del Nero, nor the son of a leading citizen, as were Pucci and Tornabuoni.<sup>42</sup> He was recognized to be of less 'quality' than the others,<sup>43</sup> but like them he was moved by long-standing bonds of loyalty to the Medici. A man of 'little authority', according to Guicciardini, he was a supporter of the Medici not on account of his ancestors or dependence on the Medici for political prominence, as Pucci was, but through having been involved in their businesses in Pisa,<sup>44</sup> which Cerretani and other sources inform us he 'governed' for Lorenzo and then Piero from the mid 1480s.<sup>45</sup>

Others involved in the conspiracy also had long-standing ties with Piero and the Medici family through their employment, like Cambi, in Medici businesses. Galeazzo Sassetti had worked for the Lyons branch of the Medici bank with his brothers from 1485 until 1492, and his father had been general manager of the bank from 1459 until his death in 1490.<sup>46</sup> The father of Francesco Martelli had worked for the bank since the 1420s and managed the branch in Rome from 1439 until his death in 1464.<sup>47</sup> The branch had then been managed until 1494 by Lorenzo Tornabuoni's father, in whose absence in 1487 it had been run by Nofri Tornabuoni.<sup>48</sup>

Francesco Cegia and Sforza Bettini had both been in the service of the Medici family since the 1470s. Bettini had been a personal agent of Lorenzo, sent on missions of diplomatic and military significance, although he does not seem to have served Piero.<sup>49</sup> Cegia, described at the time of the plot as a 'governor of the Medici household',<sup>50</sup> had entered Medici service in his youth under his father, living in Lorenzo's house, then being in the service of Giovanni from 1483 to 1487, and in the early 1490s in Pisa administering some business affairs of the Medici, while

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<sup>42</sup> See Appendix A, i.

<sup>43</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 209.

<sup>44</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 142.

<sup>45</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 239; M. Troncarelli, 'Giovanni Cambi', *D.B.I.*, xvii, pp. 97-8.

<sup>46</sup> R. de Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank, 1397-1494* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p. 389.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 212, 368.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 223, 377.

<sup>49</sup> *D.B.I.*, ix, p. 755: 'Sforza Bettini'.

<sup>50</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, i, col. 724.

Giovanni Cambi ran the bank and their interests in iron ore.<sup>51</sup> Andrea de' Medici was not a close relative of Piero's branch of the family, but had been one of four noble citizens chosen to guard Lorenzo after the Pazzi plot,<sup>52</sup> and who, as his intimate companions, had accompanied him everywhere.<sup>53</sup> Following Piero's departure, Andrea was dismissed from an official post by the *Signoria*.<sup>54</sup>

Thus the conspirators had bonds of loyalty to Piero and the Medici family which went back at least to the Laurentian era and sometimes beyond. The nature of these bonds partly explains why, uniquely amongst plots of the period, three of the five executed as the 'leaders and authors' of the plot,<sup>55</sup> and a small majority of their accomplices, were not noble but from ordinary families in the major guilds. While Ridolfi and Tornabuoni had marriage ties with the Medici, most had either served the Medici household or businesses, as Cambi did, or risen to political prominence with Medici favour despite their lack of nobility, as had Pucci and del Nero. It was these bonds, rather than any inability to find a place in the popular government, which ensured that despite the amnesty they remained loyal to Piero after 1494, and conspired for his return. For it was these bonds which ensured that they had supported Piero until his overthrow, and had desired the re-establishment of the Medici ever since.

Parenti and Cerretani report that just days after Piero's expulsion, Pucci, Tornabuoni and other 'accomplices' and 'partisans' of Piero began trying unsuccessfully with Piero's wife to persuade the French that Piero had been 'unjustly thrown out of Florence' and that they should have him return so that he could defend himself from the 'falsehoods' of other citizens and 'justify himself' before the King.<sup>56</sup> If the King found that Piero had lived 'like a citizen' and not 'tyrannically', and had been expelled 'through envy' and by 'the opposing faction' he should allow

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<sup>51</sup> Cegia, 'Ricordi', pp. 191-2; R. Ristori, 'Francesco Cegia', *D.B.I.*, xxiii, p. 324; Roover, *Rise*, p. 277.

<sup>52</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 67.

<sup>53</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>54</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 96, f. 105<sup>v</sup> (3 December 1494).

<sup>55</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 20, f. 74<sup>v</sup>; Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, pp. xlix-l: Letters of 21 August 1497; Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 212.

<sup>56</sup> Parenti, *Storia*, ed. Matucci, i, pp. 135, 137-40; Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 217.

Piero to remain in the city, where the King should compose the differences and establish 'concord and union'.<sup>57</sup> Piero's 'accomplices' were known to be making armed preparations, according to Parenti, and it was widely believed that once Piero entered Florentine territory he would seize back control of the city with the favour of the King and his own partisans.<sup>58</sup>

In the autumn of 1495 Giovanni Cambi, via 'his man', Luca Speranzini, provided funds for Piero and Giuliano, according to Lamberto dell' Antella's later confession, which helped to finance an eventually aborted advance on Florence with Virginio Orsini.<sup>59</sup> With the funds came letters from Florence, according to dell' Antella, urging Piero to come to the city, and to which Piero replied that he would do so, but that he desired to know what those 'fathers' whom he addressed would do if he did approach.<sup>60</sup> Cambi and Speranzini seem to have confirmed all this in their own examinations.<sup>61</sup> Dell' Antella said that Messer Bernardo Accolti, who was condemned in 1497, had also provided Piero with money for the enterprise, but he did not know who in Florence, apart from Cambi, was involved in the correspondence.<sup>62</sup>

Whether other plotters of 1497 were involved in soliciting Piero to come to Florence in the autumn of 1495 is not known, but it is clear from Cegia's *Ricordi segreti*,<sup>63</sup> and the examinations of the plotters,<sup>64</sup> that by this time both Cambi and Tornabuoni had been collaborating with Cegia for some months in a sustained and covert campaign to provide the outlawed Medici with financial assistance, principally through the recovery of their goods, transforming them into cash and having the funds transferred. Other future conspirators were also involved, particularly Lucrezia Salviati, Piero's sister, as well as Galeazzo Sasseti, Andrea de' Medici, and Francesco Naldini.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Parenti, *Storia*, ed. Matucci, i, p. 135.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 135-6.

<sup>59</sup> 'Processo di Lamberto dell' Antella', pp. v, ix.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. vi, ix-x.

<sup>61</sup> Cei, 'Storia', ff. 49<sup>r</sup>, 50<sup>v</sup>-51<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> 'Processo di Lamberto dell' Antella', p. xi.

<sup>63</sup> Cegia, 'Ricordi', pp. 198-200, 204-7.

<sup>64</sup> Cei, 'Storia', ff. 50<sup>v</sup>-1<sup>r</sup>; 'Processo di Lamberto dell' Antella', pp. v, viii, ix, xi.

<sup>65</sup> Cegia, 'Ricordi', pp. 207-227.



The involvement of Tornabuoni, Sassetti, and Cambi in Medici businesses before 1494 seems to have bound their own affairs so closely with those of the Medici that they had little choice but to assist them after their possessions were confiscated, and to desire their return. Thus it was that Tornabuoni took over various Medici business interests with the agreement of the new regime including the Lyons branch of the Medici bank in partnership with the Sassetti, and the Rome branch in partnership with his father.<sup>66</sup> According to Guicciardini, having entangled his affairs in those of the Medici, as well as being ‘munificent’ and having spent a great deal, had put Tornabuoni’s affairs in so much disorder that he would have shortly gone bankrupt, and his search for a way ‘to get back on his feet’ partly explained why he conspired against the regime.<sup>67</sup> Certainly, without capital or credit the bank stagnated,<sup>68</sup> and as Pucci later recalled in his examination, Tornabuoni was having ‘difficulty’ at the time of the plot ‘making up for his business affairs, which were putting him in some predicament’.<sup>69</sup> Cambi too was partly moved to plot by being ‘impoverished’ according to Guicciardini, a fact which he explains as the result of the Pisan rebellion against Florence that accompanied the overthrow of the regime, but which may also, since Cambi was their factor, have been partly the result of the fall of the Medici and the confiscation of their goods.<sup>70</sup>

Thus bound to the Medici by business and marriage ties, the conspirators had been Piero’s most loyal supporters before 1494, and they had lost most with his overthrow. For the same reasons that they had supported Piero to the end, they had desired his return ever since, to restore the Medici’s loyal supporters to power and to avenge his overthrow. Parenti reports that Pucci and Cambi confessed that they had aimed to overthrow the regime and readmit Piero, with the ‘undoing of many opposing families and citizens’ and ‘to benefit their friends and adherents and especially those of the old regime and whom they tacitly knew to be their partisans’.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Roover, *Rise*, pp. 169, 224, 310.

<sup>67</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 143.

<sup>68</sup> Roover, *Rise*, p. 370.

<sup>69</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I., 360, f. 18<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Giannozzo Pucci.

<sup>70</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 142.

<sup>71</sup> Parenti, ‘Storia’, ed. Schnitzer, pp. 206-7.

Where the plot of 1497 was the work of prominent and leading members of the Medicean regime before 1494 and others with long-standing bonds of loyalty to the Medici family, the plot by which Soderini was overthrown and the Medici returned to the city was very different. For this was the work of those who themselves or whose fathers were members of the ruling circles of the popular government. Whilst the political background of those involved has been largely neglected by modern historians,<sup>72</sup> it emerges that three of the leaders of the plot, Valori, Vettori and Capponi, and one of their accomplices, Benedetto Buondelmonti, had all held office in the *Signoria*, the Colleges or the *Otto di Guardia* in the five years before the conspiracy. They were prominent, though not leading, members of the regime they were attempting to overthrow. Albizzi and the Rucellai, the other leaders of the plot, were all the sons of men who had been leading members of the inner circles of the popular government, as were seven of their ten identifiable accomplices.<sup>73</sup>

The leaders of the plot, as Cerretani recognized, were all the sons of those who had been enemies of the Medici in 1494,<sup>74</sup> and it was their discontent with Soderini and the popular government, rather than any loyalty to the Medici, that led them to conspire against the regime. It was in the Rucellai gardens between 1503 and 1506 that the leaders of the plot were first associated with opposition to Soderini, due in no small measure, according to Guicciardini, to the influence of Bernardo Rucellai himself. Discontented with Soderini and the Great Council, Rucellai had begun the meetings in the gardens demonstrably as an academy where scholars and young students of letters met to talk of their studies, but in fact, according to Guicciardini, in order to become a 'refuge' for the 'discontented' and a 'corrupter of young men'.<sup>75</sup> Certainly discussions in the gardens concerning the history and institutions of Rome and Venice seem to have focused on Rucellai's belief that the best constitution for

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<sup>72</sup> See the brief remarks in Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. 59; Pesman Cooper, 'Pier Soderini', p. 109.

<sup>73</sup> See Appendix A, iii. The list is based on the accounts in A.S.F., C. Stroz. Ser. I, 360, f. 29<sup>r</sup>: Jacopo to Francesco Guicciardini, 3 September 1512; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 309; Nardi, *Istorie*, i. pp. 496-7.

<sup>74</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 47; Idem, *Storia*, p. 447.

<sup>75</sup> F. Guicciardini, 'Oratoria accusatoria', *Scritti autobiografici*, pp. 229-30.

Florence was an aristocratic regime with a monarchical head.<sup>76</sup> Through the meetings in the gardens, Rucellai was able not only to keep the discontented united, argued Guicciardini, but to ‘corrupt the soul’ of many young men, for his eloquence ensured that he was heard ‘like a Siren’. Since it was these young men who overthrew Soderini in 1512, the Rucellai gardens, declared Guicciardini, were the plant that produced the ‘poison’ which killed the city’s ‘liberty’.<sup>77</sup>

It was having emerged out of the political discussions in the Rucellai gardens discontented with Soderini and the popular government, that the leaders of Soderini’s overthrow became reconciled with the Medici and began to work for their return, becoming involved in the Strozzi-Medici marriage alliance of 1508. Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, a companion of Strozzi’s, Palla and Giovanni Rucellai, as well as their father, Bernardo, were amongst those twelve citizens, whom Cerretani described as Bernardo’s ‘friends’,<sup>78</sup> accused in a notification of being ‘authors and counsellors’ of the alliance. Giovanni Corsi and Filippo Buondelmonti, two of those who with the Rucellai were to urge the Medici to force the *parlamento* were also amongst the accused, whom Guicciardini recorded were all already suspected of wishing to overthrow the regime.<sup>79</sup>

Strozzi denied having been counselled by others and Bernardo wrote to the *Signoria* from Venice denying any involvement.<sup>80</sup> However, Bernardo’s responsibility for the marriage was remarked upon in the correspondence of the Strozzi family at the time,<sup>81</sup> and the tutor to Strozzi’s sons was later to recall that both Bernardo Rucellai and Filippo Buondelmonti had ‘conspired’ (*congiurato*) with Strozzi’s mother to make the alliance.<sup>82</sup> Strozzi’s brother, Lorenzo, was later to recall that their mother had sought Bernardo’s advice on the matter, and being no friend of Soderini he had urged her to proceed.<sup>83</sup> According to Segni, the idea of an alliance

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<sup>76</sup> Gilbert, ‘Bernardo Rucellai’, pp. 122-3.

<sup>77</sup> F. Guicciardini, ‘Oratoria accusatoria’, *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 230.

<sup>78</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 176, 177.

<sup>79</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 327, 331.

<sup>80</sup> A.S.F., Signori, Carteggi, Responsive, 31, ff. 255<sup>r-v</sup>: Letter of Bernardo Rucellai, 31 December 1508; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 331; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 179-80; Idem, *Storia*, p. 361.

<sup>81</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. III, 134, f. 49<sup>r</sup>: Giovanbattista Cei to Giovanni Strozzi, 2 December 1508.

<sup>82</sup> F. Zeffi, ‘Vita’, p. xv.

<sup>83</sup> Strozzi, ‘Vita’, p. xiii.

was proposed to Strozzi by Bernardo Rucellai and his sons, and both Gino Capponi and Paolo Vettori were his 'counsellors' in the affair.<sup>84</sup> Strozzi certainly wrote to Albizzi to seek his advice on whether to appear in Florence to defend himself.<sup>85</sup> There seems little doubt that those accused were involved, and that they were so because, as Cerretani argued, discontented with Soderini and the popular government they saw no better way to undermine both than by favouring the Medici.<sup>86</sup>

While the leaders of Soderini's overthrow were discontented members of the ruling circles of popular government, some of their accomplices were long-standing partisans of Medici family who had always desired their return. Amongst those involved in the coup were the 'sons and nephews' of Piero Tornabuoni, and the 'sons' of Piero Pitti,<sup>87</sup> who had both conspired in 1497 and had held no office in the popular government. Tornabuoni was to be one of the twenty citizens appointed on the day after Soderini's overthrow to advise the *Signoria* on constitutional reform and a member of the inner circles of the Medici regime after 1512.<sup>88</sup> Also involved were the sons of Luca di Maso degli Albizzi, who had been amongst those 'friends' of Piero detained in April that year,<sup>89</sup> and the 'sons' of Jacopo Pitti, brother of Piero, and one of three men who had killed Francesco Valori in 1498 in revenge for his role in the execution of the plotters the year before.<sup>90</sup>

Another of Valori's killers, Simone Tornabuoni, was himself involved in the coup of 1512.<sup>91</sup> Tornabuoni had signed the petition in favour of Savonarola in 1497, and provides a further example of how support for the friar and the Medici were not mutually exclusive.<sup>92</sup> He been amongst those in Piero's company when he went to seize the palace in November 1494,<sup>93</sup> and is recorded to have been condemned by the

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<sup>84</sup> Segni, 'Vita', pp. 281-2.

<sup>85</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. III, 134, ff. 51<sup>r-v</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, 22 December 1508.

<sup>86</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, pp. 41-2.

<sup>87</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 309; Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 496.

<sup>88</sup> See Appendix A, i.

<sup>89</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 181.

<sup>90</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 151; Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 264.

<sup>91</sup> Ughi, 'Cronica', p. 128.

<sup>92</sup> Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, p. 459.

<sup>93</sup> Parenti, *Storia*, ed. Matucci, i, p. 128.

Otto in April 1499 for having intrigued with him.<sup>94</sup> Having been declared an outlaw, his sentence was commuted in 1501 to a term of banishment from the city for five years and exclusion from the Great Council for twenty.<sup>95</sup> This was overturned by the *Signoria* on the day of Soderini's overthrow,<sup>96</sup> and Tornabuoni was to be a prominent member of the Medici regime after 1512.<sup>97</sup>

The Tornabuoni family was to be at the head of those urging the Medici to force a *parlamento*, and as were the Tornabuoni most of those involved were long-standing partisans of the Medici who had always desired their return. The Tornabuoni were recorded by Landucci to have been the only family to go to the Medici's aid in 1494.<sup>98</sup> As well as Piero, three other Tornabuoni were involved in the plot of 1497, including his brother, Messer Luigi. Gianfrancesco, another brother of Piero,<sup>99</sup> had been amongst those 'friends' of the Medici detained in April that year.<sup>100</sup> Three members of the Tornabuoni, including a son and a nephew of Piero, are recorded to have taken part in the forcing of the *parlamento*,<sup>101</sup> and others amongst the thirty-three individuals listed, such as Girolamo degli Albizzi and Antonio Lapi, were from families with an equally long-standing tradition of support for the Medici, dating back to before 1434.<sup>102</sup> Giovanni Davanzati had himself been suspected of participating in the plot of 1497, and had fled to Bologna, as did Piero Tornabuoni, when summoned to appear before the magistrates.<sup>103</sup>

Members of the Tornabuoni family had sat in the Seventy before 1494 and were to do so after 1512, but none had held seats in the Council of Eighty during the

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<sup>94</sup> Landucci, *Diario*, p. 195.

<sup>95</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 96; G. Guidi, *Lotte, pensiero e istituzioni politiche nella repubblica fiorentina dal 1494 al 1512* (Florence, 1992), p. 738.

<sup>96</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 114, f. 97<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>97</sup> Appendix A, iii.

<sup>98</sup> Landucci, *Diario*, p. 74.

<sup>99</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 54 (Tornabuoni), tav. i.

<sup>100</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 181.

<sup>101</sup> See Appendix A, iv. The list is that in B.N.F., F.P., II III 433, f. 59<sup>r</sup>: 'Nota di quelli che nel giorno del parlamento armati presono tutto il palazzo e sconpartironsi convenientemente, 1527'. The date probably refers to the year the list was made, for it is clearly a list of those involved in the *parlamento* of 1512. See Butters, *Governors*, pp. 183-4; Stephens, *Fall*, p. 63.

<sup>102</sup> Lapi and Albizzi were both the direct descendants of men who had supported the Medici in the 1420s, Kent, *Rise*, pp. 352-4.

<sup>103</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, i, coll. 712, 724.

popular regime.<sup>104</sup> Others involved in the *parlamento* were also from families that had lost political position after 1494, a fact unnoticed in modern accounts, which have largely neglected the political backgrounds of those involved.<sup>105</sup> Of the thirty whose background is known, fifteen, one half, were from families with little or no political influence in the popular government, in that neither they nor their fathers had held office during the popular regime.<sup>106</sup> Nine of those fifteen, about a third of those listed, had held such influence under the Medici, in that their fathers or, in Baccio Cini's case, they themselves, had held office before 1494. The positions they had held were modest, in the Priorate, the Colleges, and the *Otto di Guardia* rather than the Seventy and the inner circle of the regime, but the loss was no less significant for that. Girolamo Tornabuoni can be added to their number, for having held positions in the *Signoria* and the *Otto* before 1494, his only contribution to political life before 1512 was to attend two *pratiche* around 1502. The two brothers, Matteo and Cosimo Bartoli were amongst this group. Their father was one of those, according to Guicciardini, whose rise to political prominence under Lorenzo had depended solely on Medici favour.<sup>107</sup>

Following the *parlamento*, all but one of the ten individuals involved who were from families that had lost their position in the regime after 1494 were to return to power. Three, including Matteo Bartoli, were to be in the inner circles of the Medici regime, while Cini, Tornabuoni and four others were to hold prominent positions in the government after 1512. Three others from families outside the ruling circles of popular government were to rise to prominence in the Medici regime.<sup>108</sup>

Thus clearly amongst those who sought a *parlamento* there were many, as Guicciardini argued, who had held no influence during the popular regime,<sup>109</sup> and most of those had lost that position their families had held under the Medici. Yet it would be wrong to see the *parlamento* solely as the work of those from families outside the ruling circles of government after 1494. It is true that while the vast

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<sup>104</sup> Pesman Cooper, 'Florentine Ruling Group', p. 177.

<sup>105</sup> Some brief remarks can be found in Butters, *Governors*, pp. 183-4.

<sup>106</sup> See Appendix A, iv.

<sup>107</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 78-9.

<sup>108</sup> See Appendix A, iv.

<sup>109</sup> Idem, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 234.

majority of those listed were old enough to have held office sometime during the popular regime, only five of those twenty-two eligible had done so.<sup>110</sup> Many may thus have been looking to the Medici to satisfy their personal desires for political influence which the popular regime left unfulfilled. Yet half of those listed had either held office during the popular regime, or were the sons of men who had. Nine, one third, were the sons of prominent and even leading members of the inner circles of popular government.<sup>111</sup> Amongst these was Prinzivalle della Stufa, the protagonist of the plot of 1510. Too young to have held office himself, della Stufa's father had been in the *Dieci* in 1505 and 1506, and is recorded by Cerretani in 1507 to have been amongst those twenty-five citizens regularly attending *pratiche* called by the *Dieci*.<sup>112</sup>

Thus many of those supporters of the Medici involved in the *parlamento* were the sons of leading members of the popular government they sought to overthrow. In six cases, including Cristofano Sernigi and Francesco Salviati, their fathers were still alive in 1512, and they were probably acting in accordance with the political sympathies of their fathers. Certainly the fathers of all six were to be members of the *Balia* created by the *parlamento*, and leading members of the inner circles of the Medici regime thereafter.<sup>113</sup> Some, such as della Stufa and Girolamo degli Albizzi, were long-standing supporters of the Medici, as their fathers were. Others, such as Giovanni and Palla Rucellai, supported the Medici on account of their discontent with popular government, as their father did. Those associates of the Rucellai who had urged the Medici to force the *parlamento* were from a similar background. Filippo Buondelmonti was himself a leading member of the inner circles of popular government, as had been the fathers of both Giovanni Corsi and Piero Martelli, whose brother, Domenico, took part in forcing the *parlamento* itself.<sup>114</sup>

The Rucellai and their associates had supported the Medici on account of their desire for a regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant, and were pleased with

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<sup>110</sup> See Appendix A, iv. The ages of twenty-nine of the thirty-three listed are known.

<sup>111</sup> See Appendix A, iv.

<sup>112</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 137.

<sup>113</sup> See Appendix A, iv.

<sup>114</sup> On Corsi see F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 324; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 136. On the others see Appendix A, iii and iv.

the prominence afforded to *ottimati*, including supporters of the popular government, on the *Balia*. Thus they urged Lorenzo Strozzi, Bernardo's son-in-law, to return from Pisa whence he had fled as the Medici approached the city.<sup>115</sup> However, the prevailing tenor of the *parlamento* was the return to power of the Medici's loyal supporters who sought, Cerretani recorded, to 'avenge themselves and stuff themselves with possessions'.<sup>116</sup> Only the Medici themselves prevented the vengeful persecution of leading members of the popular government longed for by their partisans. The day after the *parlamento* Filippo Strozzi urged his brother, Lorenzo, to return to Florence, assuring him that the Medici had 'impeded every injury against the rage of many who called for blood' despite having had in the Palace 'all their enemies in their hands'.<sup>117</sup> Cerretani recorded that many of those 'friends of the Medici' who accompanied Giuliano during the take-over of the Palace had wanted to take some action against some of those citizens assembled there, 'some in order to avenge the Medici, and some in order to avenge their own particular injuries', although Giuliano had prevented this.<sup>118</sup> Cerretani believed that from the moment of the *parlamento* some of the *palleschi* would have wanted 'to avenge themselves', banish many from the city and remove their possessions, but the Medici, he recalled, had ensured that 'the dogs were bound'.<sup>119</sup>

In 1518 Cerretani recorded that since 1512 the *palleschi* 'had never been satisfied' because 'on their return they were almost all bankrupts and poor, and full of resentment (*sdegno*)', and would have wanted, 'having won', to 'plunder the possessions and persons of their enemies and make a regime as that of 1434', but the Medici had not consented to it.<sup>120</sup> Cerretani remarked on the difference between 1512 and earlier revolutions in Florentine history, such as those of 1433 and 1434, when one faction (*parte*) had chased out the other, and 'the victors had acquired the possessions and positions of the vanquished'.<sup>121</sup> Yet Piero Soderini, his brother,

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<sup>115</sup> B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 84: Bernardo Rucellai to Lorenzo Strozzi, 18 September 1512.

<sup>116</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 282.

<sup>117</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. III, 178, f. 90<sup>r</sup>: Filippo to Lorenzo Strozzi, 17 September 1512.

<sup>118</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 448; Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 58.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., pp. 60, 61.

<sup>120</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 350.

<sup>121</sup> Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 61.



Giovanvettorino, and three of their nephews were exiled, albeit for terms of two or three years,<sup>122</sup> and as after 1494 not all members of the ruling circles of the past regime found a place in the new. Like the plot of 1497 against the popular government, the first plot against the Medici, in 1513, was the work of those who had loyally supported the past regime until its overthrow. And also like the plot of 1497, the plot of 1513 was, at least to some extent, the work of those who had been thrown out of power and their loyal supporters, a fact wholly unrecognized in modern accounts.<sup>123</sup>

Niccolò Valori, as contemporaries remarked, had been one of the 'primi' of the past regime,<sup>124</sup> a leading member of the inner circles of the popular government, twice a member of the *Dieci*, and regularly called to *pratiche strette*.<sup>125</sup> Yet although he was one of two hundred citizens appointed for the new scrutiny in October, he was not a member of the *Balia* established by the *parlamento*, and thus was outside the inner circles of the new regime.<sup>126</sup> However, both Boscoli and Capponi, the leaders of the plot, as well as, Giovanni Folchi, had never held office, nor had any of their fathers held office in the popular government, although Folchi's father, who had worked for the Medici bank in the 1460s and 70s, had held office before 1494.<sup>127</sup> Boscoli and Capponi must be considered, although both from noble families, to have been obscure men in political terms,<sup>128</sup> since neither they nor their fathers had ever held office, and in that sense they were unique amongst the leaders of conspiracies in the period.

Whilst the leaders of the plot were not, as Valori was, former leading members of the popular government excluded from the new regime, Capponi and Folchi at least did have bonds of loyalty to the deposed Gonfalonier and the Soderini family. It appears from the examination of Pandolfo Biliotti that in the weeks after

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<sup>122</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 230 (Libro di Condanne), ff. 88<sup>r-v</sup>; A.S.F., O.G., 154, ff. 74<sup>v</sup>-5<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>123</sup> Butters, *Governors*, pp. 210-1; Ridolfi, *Machiavelli*, pp. 135-6; Villari, *Machiavelli*, ii, pp. 198-204.

<sup>124</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 75.

<sup>125</sup> Idem, *Ricordi*, p. 138; Appendix A, v.

<sup>126</sup> A.S.F., Balie, 43, ff. 54<sup>v</sup>-6<sup>r</sup>; Appendix A, v.

<sup>127</sup> Appendix A, v. For Folchi's career in the Medici bank see Roover, *Rise*, pp. 295, 316.

<sup>128</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 75.

the *parlamento* Capponi had gone to meet the Soderini in Siena, and had spoken to Biliotti about the fortunes of the deposed Gonfalonier. Biliotti had also spoken to Giovanni Folchi about the whereabouts of Giovanbattista Soderini.<sup>129</sup> Folchi himself confessed to have spoken with Machiavelli about the ‘deeds’ of the Gonfalonier and also of Giovanbattista Soderini.<sup>130</sup> Folchi’s connections to the Soderini are unknown, except that he and the Gonfalonier had for long both shared Machiavelli’s friendship, as indeed had Niccolò Valori.<sup>131</sup> It may have been Machiavelli’s relationship with the Soderini which accounted for his inclusion on the list of potential supporters drawn up by Boscoli and Capponi.<sup>132</sup> Capponi shared marriage connections with the Soderini, since his maternal uncle, a member of the Lenzi family, was married to the sister of the Gonfalonier, and being of no political standing himself he had probably looked to the Soderini for protection before 1512.<sup>133</sup>

Cosimo de’ Pazzi, the only one involved in the plot to have desired the establishment of an aristocratic regime rather than the re-establishment of the popular government, was the only one involved in the plot to have been a member of the ruling circles of the Medici regime which the conspiracy sought to overthrow. As Archbishop, Pazzi had held no office, but his father, Guglielmo, was a member of the *Balia*.<sup>134</sup> It was at Cosimo’s request that Cardinal Giovanni agreed, despite the Pazzi family’s public displeasure with the *parlamento*, to have Guglielmo appointed Gonfalonier in January 1513.<sup>135</sup> On assuming office Guglielmo declared that the Medici should be ‘as citizens’, according to the agreement following Soderini’s overthrow, and hung the old communal banner emblazoned with the word ‘Liberty’ from the windows of the Palace.<sup>136</sup> Cerretani noted that the Pazzi had been content neither with the Medicean regime of before 1494, nor with Savonarola, nor the Great

<sup>129</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., XCVII, n. 269.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, LXXXIX, n. 38.

<sup>131</sup> Machiavelli, *Lettere*, pp. 120, 135, 139-40, 197, 200; Ridolfi, *Machiavelli*, pp. 56, 78, 84, 290 n. 13; Tommasini, *Machiavelli*, i, p. 356; Dionisotti, *Machiavellerie*, p. 69.

<sup>132</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 299; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xv, coll. 573-4.

<sup>133</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 165 (Capponi), tav. xvii; *Ibid.*, disp. 141 (Soderini), tav. iv.

<sup>134</sup> See Appendix A, v.

<sup>135</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 296; *Idem*, *Dialogo*, p. 71.

<sup>136</sup> *Idem*, *Ricordi*, p. 297, Pitti, ‘Istoria’, p. 108.

Council, nor Piero Soderini nor the *parlamento*, because ‘they themselves would have wanted to govern’.<sup>137</sup>

The plot of 1513 was the work of loyal supporters of Piero Soderini and the popular government, at least one of whose leaders had bonds of loyalty to the Soderini family apart from any preference for popular government, and that may be one reason why they had opposed the regime since its inception. The plot of 1522 by contrast was led by former supporters of the Medici, although the political background of those involved has been largely neglected in modern accounts.<sup>138</sup> Both Zanobi Buondelmonti and Luigi di Messer Piero Alamanni, the poet, the leaders of the plot, were ‘principal citizens’,<sup>139</sup> but neither had held office and were too young to be members of the ruling circles of the regime, as were most of the others involved.<sup>140</sup> Alamanni’s father however, who had plotted with the Medici in 1497, had been one of the four or five leading members of the inner circles of the Medicean regime until his death in 1519,<sup>141</sup> whereupon his son, according to Cerretani, was amongst those most reputed by the Medici.<sup>142</sup> By contrast, the father of Buondelmonti had supported the overthrow of the Medici in 1494,<sup>143</sup> had purchased confiscated Medici estates in its aftermath,<sup>144</sup> and had occupied no position in the Medici regime before his death in 1515.<sup>145</sup> Yet Buondelmonti, as Alamanni, was amongst the ‘primi’ at the time of the plot, according to Cerretani, on account of his nobility and wealth, and the fact that his mother was a first cousin of Cardinal Giulio.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 71.

<sup>138</sup> Some brief remarks can be found in Hauvette, *Luigi Alamanni*, pp. 28-9.

<sup>139</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>, 107<sup>r-v</sup>: ‘Cittadini principali’.

<sup>140</sup> Appendix A, vi. Those listed, with the exceptions of Cardinal Francesco and Bishop Giuliano Soderini, were those condemned. See A.S.F., O.G., 182, ff. 59<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>141</sup> Appendix A, vi. See also Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 128; Segni, *Vita*, p. 286; cf. F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, i, p. 252.

<sup>142</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 407.

<sup>143</sup> Parenti, ‘Storia’, ed. Schnitzer, p. 13.

<sup>144</sup> Tommasini, *Machiavelli*, ii, p. 1053, records that these estates were bought back by the Medici after the plot, in 1524. They may have been purchased by Bartolomeo Buondelmonti when he was one of the *Ufficiali dei ribelli* in 1504, A.S.F., Tratte, 905, f. 54<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>145</sup> See Appendix A, vi. Bartolomeo Buondelmonti seems to have been considered as a possible official of the *Monte* before his death, see A.S.F., M.A.P., XCVII, n. 20.

<sup>146</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 407. Buondelmonti’s mother was the daughter of Bianca de’ Medici, the Cardinal’s aunt. See Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 24 (Buondelmonti), tav. ix.

Buondelmonti played host to Lorenzo's mother and daughter following the Duke's death in 1519,<sup>147</sup> and is on a list of citizens to be 'remunerated' drawn up before the plot.<sup>148</sup> Cambi recorded at the time of the conspiracy that Cardinal Giulio had considered both Buondelmonti and Alamanni as 'friends', and thus they had often dined with him at his house.<sup>149</sup> Jacopo da Diacceto was also a familiar and much loved dining companion of the Cardinal, according to Nardi, and it was the Cardinal who had him appointed to a lectureship at the Florentine *Studio* in Pisa in 1521.<sup>150</sup> Battista della Palla, according to Nardi, had cultivated the benevolence of Lorenzo de' Medici since before 1512,<sup>151</sup> and he is recorded to have been one of four young men in 1514 that Lorenzo took around with him.<sup>152</sup> At some stage in the next few years he and his elder brother, Mariotto were named on a list of 'faithful popular citizens',<sup>153</sup> and it was in response to a request from Battista to Lorenzo in February 1517 that Mariotto was drawn as a Prior later that year.<sup>154</sup> Thus it was probably on Battista's account that the name of his family appears on a list of 'confidants and friends' drawn up by 1518.<sup>155</sup> Della Palla was amongst those supporters of the Medici who were covertly granted monies from public funds at Lorenzo's behest,<sup>156</sup> and he had held office in the Colleges in 1519 and the *Signoria* in 1521.<sup>157</sup> Thus he was a prominent member of the regime he conspired to overthrow.

As with those who conspired against Soderini in 1512, it was at discussions in the Rucellai gardens that the leaders of the plot first became associated together, this time as students and admirers of Roman republican liberty.<sup>158</sup> Buondelmonti, Alamanni, della Palla, da Diacceto, as well as Antonio Brucioli had all frequented literary discussions in the gardens, and concerned themselves particularly with 'the

<sup>147</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, iii, p. 47.

<sup>148</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, f. 67<sup>v</sup>: 'Nota di cittadini che è bene remunerargli'.

<sup>149</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 202.

<sup>150</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 85.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 254.

<sup>152</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 50.

<sup>153</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, f. 18<sup>r</sup>: 'Cittadini popolari fideli'.

<sup>154</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I, 8, n. 65: Battista della Palla to Lorenzo de' Medici, 18 February 1517.

Mariotto sat in the *Signoria* of May and June 1517, A.S.F., Tratte, 61, f. 34<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>155</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, ff. 99<sup>r-v</sup>: 'Confidanti e amici'. Lanfredino Lanfredini (d. 1518) is on this list.

<sup>156</sup> Bullard, *Filippo Strozzi*, p. 139 n. 70.

<sup>157</sup> Appendix A, vi.

<sup>158</sup> See the useful remarks in Dionisotti, *Machiavellerie*, pp. 145-50.

lessons of the histories', according to Nerli, for which, at their instance, Machiavelli had composed the *Discourses*, dedicated to Buondelmonti in 1519.<sup>159</sup> It was their study of history, according to Nerli, that had inspired them emulate the glory of the ancients and conspire against the regime, and their regard for all Machiavelli's works was such, Nardi recalled, that he was held somewhat responsible for the thoughts and actions of the conspirators.<sup>160</sup>

However, there was clearly more to the plot than simply the desire to re-establish the Great Council and to create an aristocratic regime, as we have seen. While there is no doubting the common admiration for the Roman ideal of public liberty which bound these conspirators together, it was the desire of Buondelmonti and the others for revenge, as we shall see, which precipitated and drove the conspiracy. Moreover, there were others in the plot who had not attended the Rucellai gardens, such as Luigi di Tommaso Alamanni.<sup>161</sup> He was an obscure individual in political terms, but as the others was reported to have been a supporter of the Medici family, who had received many benefits from the Cardinal.<sup>162</sup>

Niccolò Martelli by contrast had no such background of support for the Medici. His father had held office in the Colleges in 1514 but was on a list of *nemici* drawn up by 1517.<sup>163</sup> Little is known of Martelli himself except that having been banished from the city for a year for certain 'inconveniences and scandals' in August 1518,<sup>164</sup> he was in France by the winter of 1521 saying that he had been 'chased out' of his home by the Cardinal, and that he did not want to be in Florence while the Cardinal was there because the Cardinal had once made him leave.<sup>165</sup> It was in France, according to his confession, that being 'very eager to serve the King' he was commissioned 'with many offerings' to deliver letters to Buondelmonti. Later he was

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<sup>159</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 138.

<sup>160</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 86.

<sup>161</sup> His name is absent from the lists given by Kristeller, *Studies*, pp. 299 n. 51, 323 n. 201.

<sup>162</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xxxiii, col. 297.

<sup>163</sup> Appendix A, vi. See also Busini, *Lettere*, p. 231; F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, i, pp. 246-7.

<sup>164</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 174, f. 28<sup>r</sup>; *Ibid.*, 176, ff. 87<sup>v</sup>, 92<sup>r</sup>, 93<sup>r</sup>; *Ibid.*, 177, f. 3<sup>r</sup>; *Ibid.*, 223 (Libro di Bandi), f. 129<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>165</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', pp. 254-5, 267.

offered 'seas and mountains' to poison the Cardinal, which he accepted, being eager, 'as are most mortals', to enter the service of a 'great prince'.<sup>166</sup>

If Martelli had possibly not always desired the overthrow of the Medici, the Soderini family clearly had. All but one, Giovanvettorio, of the seven members of the immediate family of the deposed Gonfalonier, led by Cardinal Francesco, were found to have been involved in the plot. Although the banishment imposed in October 1512 had been lifted in return for Francesco's support of Cardinal Giovanni in the conclave of April 1513,<sup>167</sup> the Soderini were on lists of *nemici* drawn up by 1517, and excluded from the regime.<sup>168</sup> When the regime banished a number of opponents in August 1517 measures were also taken against both Tommaso di Paolantonio and Giovanvettorio.<sup>169</sup> As Francesco's recent biographer has shown, the Soderini bargained with the Medici only to ensure their survival, and ever since 1512 they had sought the restoration of Piero as Gonfalonier, and of their family to its former leading position in the city.<sup>170</sup> Bernardo da Verrazzano, an obscure individual in political terms but on a list of *nemici* drawn up by 1518,<sup>171</sup> had also desired the Soderini's return since 1512, for he was a long-standing 'supporter' (*adherente*) of Cardinal Soderini,<sup>172</sup> and as a Florentine banker in Rome had been closely involved in the financial affairs of the Cardinal since before 1512.<sup>173</sup>

Thus while Buondelmonti and his associates were former supporters of the Medici who desired to establish an aristocratic regime, the involvement of the Soderini and Bernardo da Verrazzano, their loyal supporter, meant that the plot was to a large extent the work of those thrown out of power, and indeed who were to return to power following the overthrow of the Medici in 1527. Tommaso, Giovanvettorio and Giovanbattista Soderini, as well as the father of Niccolò Martelli,

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid., pp. 240-1.

<sup>167</sup> A.S.F., Balie, 43, ff. 136<sup>r-v</sup>; Lowe, *Francesco Soderini*, p. 72.

<sup>168</sup> Appendix A, vi; B.N.F., N.A., 988, f. 94<sup>r</sup>: 'Inimici'; Ibid., f. 158<sup>r</sup>: 'Ultimi'. Both name the Soderini family. On the dates of these lists see Appendix A, Sources n. 9.

<sup>169</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 168, f. 92<sup>r</sup> (24 August 1517). Order for Tommaso, then living outside the city, to represent himself in Florence the next day, and for Giovanvettorio not to leave the city without the permission of the *Otto*.

<sup>170</sup> Lowe, *Francesco Soderini*, pp. 90-101.

<sup>171</sup> Appendix A, vi.

<sup>172</sup> A.S.Mo., Canc. Duc., Firenze, 13 (unfoliated): Benedetto Fantini to the Duke, 29 April 1523.

<sup>173</sup> Lowe, *Francesco Soderini*, p. 69; 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', p. 248.

were all to be in the inner circles of the popular government after 1527, members of the *Dieci* or the *Uomini di pratica*, those elected to the advisory body established in August 1528.<sup>174</sup>

The Giachinotti-Pitti plot of 1527 was entirely the work of those thrown out of power. Giovanbattista Soderini was at the head of the three exiles involved, proving wrong Martelli's prediction in 1524 that following the death of Cardinal Francesco the Soderini would 'live in peace', because they were left 'without favour and support'.<sup>175</sup> All those involved had been opposed to the Medici since 1512, and desired the restoration of popular government since its overthrow. Carducci had been in voluntary exile in Padua and Venice since 1512 because, according to Varchi, he was discontented with the regime and suspect to the Medici.<sup>176</sup> Nobili was one of those on the list of potential supporters made by Boscoli and Capponi.<sup>177</sup> Both he and Pescioni were on lists of *nemici* since before the plot of 1513,<sup>178</sup> and Pescioni was one of those sent to their villas in 1517.<sup>179</sup> Carducci, Giachinotti and Pitti were all on lists of opponents drawn up by 1517,<sup>180</sup> and both Giachinotti and Pitti were amongst those detained in 1521.<sup>181</sup> None had held office under the Medici regime, although both Giachinotti and Pescioni had sat in the *Signoria* before 1512 and Carducci had been a leading member of the ruling circles of popular government.<sup>182</sup>

While Nobili had held no office before 1512, he did have long-standing bonds of loyalty to the Soderini family. He had married a niece of Piero Soderini in 1506,<sup>183</sup> was heavily involved in the business affairs of the family by 1512,<sup>184</sup> and was still when their possessions were confiscated after the plot of 1522.<sup>185</sup> Since then

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<sup>174</sup> Appendix A, vi. On the measure of 1528 see Roth, *Last Republic*, p. 116.

<sup>175</sup> Martelli, 'Discorso', ed. Guasti, 'Documenti', p. 227.

<sup>176</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 174; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xlv, coll. 91, 118.

<sup>177</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 299.

<sup>178</sup> Appendix A, vii.

<sup>179</sup> The list of those banished is in Appendix B.

<sup>180</sup> Appendix A, vii.

<sup>181</sup> The list of those detained is in Appendix C.

<sup>182</sup> Appendix A, vii.

<sup>183</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 141 (Soderini), tav. vi.

<sup>184</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXXIV, n. 376: Tommaso Soderini to Francesco di Jacopo da Empoli, 23 October 1512.

<sup>185</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, f. 31<sup>v</sup>.

he had been in voluntary exile,<sup>186</sup> probably joining Tommaso Soderini for a time, before later becoming involved in the plot with Giovanbattista.<sup>187</sup> Pieradovardo Giachinotti also had long-standing ties with the Soderini, apparently dating from after the plot of 1513, when he may have been arrested and examined, as a result of mutual discontent with the Medici.<sup>188</sup> He had been described by Goro Gheri in 1519 as the 'secretary' of Cardinal Soderini, on account of which Gheri wanted him arrested when he came to the city in May of that year.<sup>189</sup> The Pope had also wanted him arrested, believing that from Giachinotti one could learn of the 'intrigues' (*pratiche*) of the Soderini 'both past and present' with Florentines, and more significantly, of those of the Cardinal with 'all the other princes' in Italy.<sup>190</sup>

The Giachinotti-Pitti plot was the work of those who had desired the overthrow of the Medici and the restoration of popular government ever since 1512, the work of prominent and leading members of the popular government and their loyal supporters who had been out of power ever since its overthrow. And they were to return to power following the fall of the Medici in May. Nobili was to be one of the Nine of the Militia, and like Soderini both Carducci and Giachinotti were to be in the inner circles of the popular government of the last republic.<sup>191</sup>

By contrast the plot of Filippo Strozzi and others against the Medici in 1527 was the work of former supporters of the Medici. Indeed, with the exception of Lorenzo Strozzi, the plot was the work of the most important leading members of inner circles of the regime they were attempting to overthrow, and in that sense was unique amongst the conspiracies of the period. Niccolò Capponi had been on a list of *nemici* drawn up by 1517, where all four others involved were on lists of supporters drawn up at that time, but he was made a member of the Seventy in 1522 and of the *Otto di Pratica* in 1524.<sup>192</sup> Both Francesco Vettori and Matteo Strozzi were amongst

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<sup>186</sup> F. Valori, 'Ricordi', f. 4<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>187</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 72, 80.

<sup>188</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXLII, n. 9, f. 2<sup>r</sup>: Benedetto Buondelmonti to Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, 4 May 1519.

<sup>189</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, v, f. 41<sup>v</sup>: Gheri to Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, 2 May 1519.

<sup>190</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXLII, n. 9, f. 2<sup>r</sup>: Benedetto Buondelmonti to Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, 4 May 1519.

<sup>191</sup> Appendix A, vii.

<sup>192</sup> See Appendix A, viii.



the four individuals said to be governing the regime in 1522 and 1523,<sup>193</sup> and the two most regular members of the *Otto di Pratica* and *Accoppiatori* from 1524 until the time of the plot.<sup>194</sup> Filippo Strozzi had been the key figure in the financial administration of the regime since 1515, Depositor general of the Pope and in charge *de facto* of the office of Depositor of the *Signoria*.<sup>195</sup>

Capponi, Vettori and Matteo Strozzi were to encourage and protect the young nobles asking for arms, led by the Salviati, and with the Salviati were perceived to be at the head of the *Tumulto*. The Salviati were also former supporters of the Medici, and Averardo Salviati had twice held office in the *Signoria*, and was thus a prominent member of the regime.<sup>196</sup> Piero and Giuliano Salviati were too young to have held office, but Piero had been a companion of Ippolito de' Medici,<sup>197</sup> and Giuliano's father had been involved in the *parlamento* of 1512, and one of those citizens Lorenzo de' Medici had hired for his company when Captain-General.<sup>198</sup>

These men had all been closely associated with each other after 1524 as the leaders of those supporters of the Medici who favoured a broader government, and were opposed to any further restrictions in the state. Nerli further noted the ties of friendship and marriage between them. Vettori was a brother-in-law of Capponi and close friends with Filippo Strozzi. Piero and Averardo Salviati were cousins of Capponi and brothers-in-law of Matteo Strozzi.<sup>199</sup> Capponi, one can add, was a brother-in-law of Filippo Strozzi.<sup>200</sup> Nerli describes how, bound together by such family ties, this group began to be 'very strong and powerful' compared to that of the stricter partisans who favoured a narrower regime, because it brought together 'so many favours, so much wealth, so much credit and so great numbers of relatives' and because of the growth in 'reputation' and 'credit' of Capponi and Filippo Strozzi, who 'for their many qualities, and for their riches were followed by a large band of

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<sup>193</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 413, 417, 430.

<sup>194</sup> Appendix A, viii.

<sup>195</sup> Bullard, *Filippo Strozzi*, pp. 80, 132.

<sup>196</sup> Appendix A, viii.

<sup>197</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 7.

<sup>198</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXXXII, f. 93<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>199</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, pp. 142-3.

<sup>200</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 165 (Capponi), tav. xiv.

honoured citizens'.<sup>201</sup> Thus it was that when this group abandoned the regime in 1527 to work against it, to provide leadership and protection to the young nobles demanding arms, the regime was unable to prevent the clamour towards revolt.

The importance of marriage ties in binding together the leading opponents of the Medici in 1527, as Vettori's biographer has pointed out, was to illustrate the prudence of Lorenzo's desire to control marriage alliances between the *ottimati*.<sup>202</sup> The fact that the marriage ties between the conspirators of 1527 all dated from the period of popular government is also significant. For it shows the dangers presented to the Medici after 1512 by the bonds established between *ottimati* during the popular regime. It provides a further example of the way in which the events of 1527 were the result not only of the failures of the Medici in the 1520s, but also of their earlier failures in 1494.

There were other leading members of the regime involved in the *Tumulto* besides Capponi, Vettori and Matteo Strozzi, and who with them directed the revolt in its later stages from the room of the Gonfalonier. Four of the twelve citizens named in accounts whose careers are known,<sup>203</sup> had sat in the *Otto di Pratica* since 1524, including Francesco Martelli and Jacopo Gianfigliuzzi, who had both conspired in favour of the Medici in 1497.<sup>204</sup> Giovanni degli Alberti was a member of the Seventy, and six others, including Lorenzo Segni, Capponi's brother-in-law,<sup>205</sup> had all held prominent but not leading political office since 1512.<sup>206</sup> Three of these prominent citizens, including Segni, were to advance to the inner circles of government following the overthrow of the Medici in May.<sup>207</sup>

Benivieni recorded at the time that those *grandi* in the Palace such as Capponi, Strozzi, and Averardo Salviati were partly there 'for themselves' and partly 'pushed there by the multitude'.<sup>208</sup> Foscari noted that those 'friends and relatives' of

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<sup>201</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 143.

<sup>202</sup> Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. 294. See also Butters, *Governors*, pp. 188-9, 237.

<sup>203</sup> Nardi, 'Lettera', p. 137; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 117.

<sup>204</sup> See Appendix A, x. On Martelli's role in the revolt see Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 108.

<sup>205</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 165 (Capponi), tav. xiv.

<sup>206</sup> The others are Lorenzo Strozzi, Averardo Salviati and Alessandro Segni.

<sup>207</sup> See Appendix A, x.

<sup>208</sup> B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 143: Paolo Benivieni to Bernardo Segni, 2 May 1527.

the Medici and leading citizens involved were moved not just by the desire for liberty but by the desire to save themselves from popular anger with the regime.<sup>209</sup> Certainly there had been more than an element of self-preservation in the motives of Vettori and the others who conspired with Filippo Strozzi. The best illustration of that is Vettori's fear that following the overthrow of the regime he and Strozzi would both find themselves 'wretched' and 'exiled' on account of their past associations with the Medici. Strozzi assured Vettori in January that he would not have 'so much fear' if he knew of the 'reverence' born for him by the two outlaws also involved,<sup>210</sup> and for the same reasons he assured his own brother, Lorenzo, of the 'confidence' he held in Buondelmonti and della Palla, whom he found 'to love the city and the universal good truly more than their any comfort or benefit'.<sup>211</sup> Vettori and the others who conspired with Strozzi may have desired to pre-empt any revolt that would not look so kindly on leading members of the Medicean regime.

However, also amongst those in the room of the Gonfalonier during the revolt were Giovanni Peruzzi and Francesco Tosinghi,<sup>212</sup> who had both been known opponents of the regime since 1512. Tosinghi had been on the list of possible supporters drawn up by the conspirators of 1513, on account of which he had been arrested and examined,<sup>213</sup> and both he and Peruzzi had been on lists of *nemici* since before the plot,<sup>214</sup> and both amongst those banished in 1517, and detained in 1521.<sup>215</sup> Tosinghi had held office in 1523 as a Captain of the Guelf Party, an exceptional favour for such a long-standing opponent, and due no doubt to the elevation of his father to the Seventy the previous year. Peruzzi however, had been a prominent member of the popular government but had held no office since 1512. Both were to be members of the inner circles of popular government of the last republic.<sup>216</sup> Committed opponents such as Peruzzi, or their sons, and others out of power since

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<sup>209</sup> Foscari, 'Relazione', p. 51.

<sup>210</sup> Bardi, 'Filippo Strozzi', p. 55: Filippo Strozzi to Francesco Vettori, 16 January 1527.

<sup>211</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. III, 108, ff. 101<sup>r-v</sup>: Filippo Strozzi to Lorenzo Strozzi, 5 January 1527.

<sup>212</sup> On Tosinghi's role in the revolt see Anon., 'Cronica', f. 155<sup>r</sup>; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 131.

<sup>213</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xv, col. 574; Vaglianti, *Storia*, p. 237.

<sup>214</sup> Appendix A, x.

<sup>215</sup> Appendices B and C.

<sup>216</sup> Appendix A, x.

1512, were at the forefront of the revolt. This has not been recognized in modern accounts, which have completely ignored the political background of those involved.<sup>217</sup>

Of the eight principal members of the young nobles led by the Salviati in the months preceding the *Tumulto*,<sup>218</sup> only the father of Antonio Berardi had been named on lists of supporters of the regime, and his was the only father to have held office since 1512. The fathers of six however, had held office under the popular regime before 1512, and in the case of the father of Battista del Bene that had meant being a leading member of the regime's inner circle. The fathers of four of those six, including of Dante da Castiglione, were to hold office during the last republic, and the father of Niccolò Machiavelli was to be a member of the inner circles of the popular government. Three of those from families who had lost position after 1512 were the sons of those who had been known opponents of the regime since the overthrow of popular government. Both Battista del Bene and his father, and the fathers of both Niccolò Machiavelli and Dante da Castiglione, had been on lists of *nemici* from before 1518.<sup>219</sup>

Castiglione and del Bene had been close since at least 1525 when they were both summoned to appear before the *Otto*, probably on account of some act of violence.<sup>220</sup> A violent background was something they shared with Piero Salviati, who had been fined in 1524 with fourteen others for carrying arms.<sup>221</sup> Yet their political backgrounds were quite different and Pitti provides an interesting insight into the relationship between Salviati and his principal followers. Salviati's leadership of the young nobles depended on both his great wealth and his marriage connections with the leading citizens of the regime, according to Pitti, and he explains that Castiglione and the other young nobles followed him partly on account of the largesse of his household, and partly because they planned to 'use him for some political change', presuming that by means of his favour the regime would take

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<sup>217</sup> See for example Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 23-7.

<sup>218</sup> The list is based on those named in Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 92-3.

<sup>219</sup> See Appendix A, ix.

<sup>220</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 223 (Libro di Bandi), f. 255<sup>r</sup> (January 1525).

<sup>221</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 188, f. 42<sup>r</sup> (March 1524).

no action against them.<sup>222</sup> Salviati failed to save Castiglione from punishment in January 1527, and may not even have tried to do so according to Pitti, but it does seem as though an initially reluctant Salviati was pushed by his followers towards revolt. Varchi explains that it was Salviati's reluctance, on account either of fear or support for the regime, that was the reason that the activities of the young nobles had subsided in February 1527 rather than resulting in revolt, as they did later in April.<sup>223</sup>

Thus while Salviati was a former supporter of the Medici, at the forefront of the noble youths involved in the *Tumulto* were those from families opposed to the Medici since the overthrow of the popular regime, and others from families who had been out of power since 1512. That was also the case with those twenty citizens young and old who most distinguished themselves in the revolt.<sup>224</sup> Fourteen were from families outside the ruling circles of the Medici regime, six of whom, including Francesco Bandini, were from families prominent in the popular government before 1512. Pierfrancesco Portinari was the only one to have held office himself since 1512, a single appearance in the Colleges in 1518, and he was to advance to the inner circles of the regime following the overthrow of the Medici in May.<sup>225</sup>

In the cases of seven of those from families outside the ruling circles of government since 1512, they or their fathers were on lists of *nemici* drawn up before 1517.<sup>226</sup> These include Daniello Strozzi, on the list of potential supporters made by the conspirators of 1513;<sup>227</sup> Giovanni Rinuccini, who in 1516 had declared 1512 to be the year he died; and the son of Niccolò Paganelli, condemned for verbal offences in 1515. Rinuccini and Paganelli were both amongst those banished in 1517 and those detained in 1521.<sup>228</sup> Three of these *nemici*, including Rinuccini, had themselves

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<sup>222</sup> Pitti, 'Istoria', p. 148.

<sup>223</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 93.

<sup>224</sup> The twenty include the seven citizens condemned for their involvement in the revolt, and those named in the account of Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 122. On the role of Cavalcanti and Antonio Alamanni in the revolt see Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 107, 108-9. On Corsini see L. Guicciardini, 'Sacco', p. 138; Segni, 'Vita', p. 299; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 105. On Corsi and Strozzi see B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 143: Paolo Benivieni to Bernardo Segni, 2 May 1527.

<sup>225</sup> Appendix A, xi. On the role of Bandini and Portinari in the revolt see B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 144: Paolo Benivieni to Bernardo Segni, 4 May 1527

<sup>226</sup> Appendix A, xi.

<sup>227</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 299.

<sup>228</sup> Appendices B and C.

held prominent office during the popular government before 1512 and two others, including Francesco Corsi, were the sons of *nemici* who had lost position with the return of the Medici.<sup>229</sup> Ser Giuliano da Ripa, who had been in trouble with the *Otto* in 1515,<sup>230</sup> on account of his possession and veneration of images of Savonarola,<sup>231</sup> had held no office in the popular regime. However, he had been dismissed in December 1512 from the post in the Chancery granted to him for life in 1494 as a reward for his role, as notary of the *Signoria*, in drawing up the provision for the expulsion of the Medici.<sup>232</sup>

Strozzi and Corsi's father were both to be members of the Council of one hundred and twenty established after the overthrow of the Medici in May,<sup>233</sup> Paganelli's father was to sit in the Colleges, and Rinuccini was to be a leading member of the inner circles of popular government during the last republic. Francesco Bandini and two others involved from families outside ruling circles since 1512, were to hold prominent positions after 1527.<sup>234</sup>

The revolt was above all the expression of the long-held desire of the young nobles and others involved for the restoration of popular government, and at their head were those who themselves or whose fathers had opposed the Medici ever since 1512, who had been prominent members of the ruling circles of popular government and out of power ever since its overthrow. These men had a fear and hatred of those who had supported the Medici not shared by those such as Capponi who were themselves leading members of the regime. Contemporaries recalled how Paolo de' Medici, Bartolomeo Valori, Palla Rucellai and others seen as too close to the Medici and 'enemies of liberty' were refused entry to the Palace by the young nobles at the

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<sup>229</sup> See Appendix A, xi.

<sup>230</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 161, f. 33<sup>r</sup> (20 February 1515): Summons to appear before the *Otto* the next day. There is no record of da Ripa having been condemned.

<sup>231</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXVI, n. 109: Galeotto de' Medici to Lorenzo de' Medici, 7 February 1515.

<sup>232</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 114, f. 138<sup>r</sup>. For the original appointment see *Ibid.*, 96, f. 129<sup>v</sup> (31 December 1494); Marzi, *Cancellaria*, pp. 264, 305, 507-09.

<sup>233</sup> A.S.F., Tratte, 719, ff. 76<sup>r-v</sup>. Others in the Council who had been involved in plots against the Medici and the *Tumulto del Venerdì* include Lorenzo Segni, Giovanbattista Soderini, Tommaso di Paolantonio Soderini, and Niccolò Valori. Giovanni Machiavelli and Lorenzo Martelli were both the fathers of participants in plots against the Medici.

<sup>234</sup> See Appendix A, xi.

beginning of the revolt and driven away by their threats.<sup>235</sup> However, other citizens had called Paolo to the Palace, and Valori in particular had been encouraged by both Capponi and Cavalcanti, according to Nardi, who 'better knew his mind'. Following his rejection, and fearful of some attack on account of the 'suspicion' towards him, according to Nardi, Valori promptly decided to rally to the defence of the regime, as did Rucellai and Paolo de' Medici.<sup>236</sup> Indeed Valori's rejection was of some significance to the outcome of the revolt, according to contemporaries, for it was he who secured the gate through which the Medici returned to the city, accompanied by Urbino and the other commanders of the League.<sup>237</sup>

Those implacable opponents of the Medici involved in the conspiracy of 1522, the Giachinotti-Pitti plot of 1527 and the *Tumulto* sought not only the restoration of popular government but revenge, just as the partisans of the Medici had done in 1497 and 1512. Excluded from power since 1512, banished in 1517, imprisoned in 1521, they had endured the full personal costs of the fear and hatred of the regime towards them, and following the overthrow of the Medici regime in May 1527 they were to seek to avenge all that they and the city had suffered since 1512. They were to be amongst the foremost members of the *arrabbiati* who sought the exclusion and persecution of former supporters of the Medici, and were utterly opposed to Capponi's attempts to accommodate them within the government.

Pierfilippo Pandolfini was amongst their number, although his father, Alessandro, had been a soldier in Medici employ before 1512,<sup>238</sup> excluded from popular government, and was to return after 1512 to the prominence he had enjoyed before 1494.<sup>239</sup> In his attack on Capponi in 1528 Pandolfini expressed outrage at the 'malice' and 'madness' by which those responsible for all the 'wickedness' suffered by the *popolo* since 1512, who deserved to be 'deprived not only of life but of burial', were being given a share of the honours. It was madness because 'revolution

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<sup>235</sup> Foscari, 'Relazione', p. 51; Carnesecchi, 'Assedio', p. 447; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 149; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 106-7.

<sup>236</sup> Nardi, 'Lettera', pp. 135, 137; Idem, *Istorie*, ii, p. 135; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 149; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 110, 116.

<sup>237</sup> Foscari, 'Relazione', pp. 51-2; Carnesecchi, 'Assedio', p. 447.

<sup>238</sup> B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 156 (Pandolfini), tav. v.

<sup>239</sup> Appendix A, xi.

would soon result of it'.<sup>240</sup> As that remark shows, it was fear as much as hatred that lay behind the desire of the *arrabbiati* for the exclusion and persecution of former supporters of the Medici regime. Yet there was hatred and a desire for revenge, and those long-standing opponents of the Medici involved in the plots of 1522 and 1527 and in the *Tumulto*, such as Pandolfini and Jacopo Alamanni, were at its forefront.

Tommaso di Paolantonio Soderini and Baldassare Carducci were two of the three leading *arrabbiati* during the last republic, who would have wanted, according to Segni and Nerli, to 'avenge' themselves against supporters of the Medici.<sup>241</sup> Carducci is recorded to have argued publicly that the commune needed to 'bloody itself with the death of those who had been favourites of the Medici',<sup>242</sup> and Daniello Strozzi was one of his supporters.<sup>243</sup> Both Pitti and Giachinotti were to support the *arrabbiato* Gonfalonier Francesco Carducci,<sup>244</sup> and both had been amongst the five Syndics appointed in June 1527, as were Carducci and Alessandro Segni.<sup>245</sup> Bernardo da Verrazzano and Rinaldo Corsini were amongst those appointed Syndics a year later.<sup>246</sup> Bartolomeo Pescioni, Antonio Alamanni, and the father of the executed Jacopo da Diacceto were amongst the five officials of the *balzello* in June 1527;<sup>247</sup> Baldassare Carducci and Francesco Tosinghi, amongst those appointed in October,<sup>248</sup> and Giovanni Rinuccini amongst those appointed in May 1528.<sup>249</sup> These taxes were levied particularly heavily on supporters of the Medici regime.<sup>250</sup> Those young nobles at the forefront of the demands for arms preceding the *Tumulto*, such as Castiglione, Machiavelli, del Bene and Berardi, were all to be leading members, with Jacopo Alamanni, of the young *arrabbiati* in the last republic, responsible for the

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<sup>240</sup> Pandolfini, 'Sermone', f. 81<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>241</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 31; Nerli, *Commentari*, pp. 159-60.

<sup>242</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 64.

<sup>243</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 11.

<sup>244</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, pp. 198, 209, 219.

<sup>245</sup> A.S.F., Balie, 46, f. 2<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>246</sup> Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. 204 n. 50.

<sup>247</sup> A.S.F., Tratte, 906, f. 114<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>248</sup> Anon., 'Cronica', f. 165<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>249</sup> A.S.F., Tratte, 906, f. 91<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>250</sup> Suriano, 'Relazione', p. 418.



most violent threats against former supporters of the Medici before and during the siege, even of attempting to murder Ottaviano de' Medici.<sup>251</sup>

Capponi and his attempts at moderation were to have their supporters from amongst those involved in the *Tumulto* and plots against the Medici, including Piero Salviati, Alamanno de' Pazzi, Rinaldo Corsini, Piero Vettori, Salvestro Aldobrandini and Zanobi Buondelmonti.<sup>252</sup> Most were from families that had not been prominent since 1512, but some, perhaps all, were former supporters of the Medici.<sup>253</sup> What most distinguished Carducci, Soderini and other conspirators who sought the re-establishment of popular government and the exclusion and persecution of supporters of the Medici regime was their long-standing opposition to the Medici.

Like most of those involved in plots against the Medici, so most of the forty individuals condemned for verbal offences against the Medici regime were from outside the ruling circles of the Medicean government, and many had been thrown out of power in 1512. In the cases of twenty-four of the twenty-seven condemned from families in the guilds, neither they nor their fathers had held office after 1512. Six of those twenty-four, including Giovanni Bartolomei, had been prominent members of the popular government before 1512, and both Bartolomeo Redditi and Bartolomeo Pandolfini had been on the fringes of the inner circles of the popular regime, having spoken in *pratiche* on their own behalf, though on a few occasions only. Most were long-standing opponents of the Medici and ten were on lists of *nemici* drawn up before they were condemned.<sup>254</sup>

Some of those listed *nemici* and other implacable opponents of the Medici involved in the *Tumulto* and other attacks against the regime were from families that had been enemies of the Medici since the early fifteenth century. The ancestors of Peruzzi had been banished in 1434, and those of Corsi deprived of office,<sup>255</sup> while

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<sup>251</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 189; Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 15, 17-18, 40; Segni, *Storie*, i, pp. 41-42; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 208; *Ibid.*, ii, p. 123.

<sup>252</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 12-14, 27; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 360, 399.

<sup>253</sup> See Appendix A: vi, ix, and xi.

<sup>254</sup> See Appendix A, xii. Although Bartolomeo Pandolfini held no office after 1512, he was appointed to the *Balia* in May 1514, seven months before he was condemned, A.S.F., *Balie*, 43 f. 193<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>255</sup> Kent, *Rise*, pp. 355-7. A.S.F., O.G., 224, f. 87<sup>v</sup> records that the banishments were renewed in 1458 and included Peruzzi's grandfather.

the ancestors of Francesco Serragli and the grandfather of Ubertino Boncianni, two of those condemned in the aftermath of the plot of 1513, had been deprived of office in 1444 and 1466 respectively.<sup>256</sup> Francesco Bandini's ancestors had also been deprived of office in 1444, and a member of his family had murdered Giuliano in the Pazzi plot in 1478.<sup>257</sup> The Rinuccini and the family of Niccolò Martelli had quarrelled with Lorenzo in the 1470s and suffered as a result.<sup>258</sup>

However, most of those long-standing *nemici* involved in plots and other attacks against the Medici after 1512, such as the Soderini and Niccolò Valori, were those 'implacable' opponents described by Guicciardini shortly after 1512, who themselves or whose fathers been supporters of the Medici but opposed them in 1494, and continued to oppose the Medici until 1512 without ever reconciling with them.<sup>259</sup> Cardinal Soderini had been involved in the plot of April 1494.<sup>260</sup> The fathers of Martino Scarfi and Alessandro Manetti, who were condemned for verbal offences in both 1513 and 1523, had both been amongst the twenty *accoppiatori* appointed in December 1494 after Piero's overthrow.<sup>261</sup> The father of Giovanni Bartolomei had been rewarded by the Medici for his role in drawing up the acts of the *parlamento* of 1466,<sup>262</sup> but he had replaced the Medicean notary of the *Riformagioni* in November 1494 and drawn up the provisions of the *parlamento* for the abolition of the Medicean system of government, and later for the establishment of the Great Council.<sup>263</sup>

Thus plots in early sixteenth century Florence, whether aimed to establish a regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant, to re-establish the popular government, or to restore the Medici to power, were generally the work of the same group: those from noble families of political prominence, often the leading families in the city.

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<sup>256</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 224, ff. 78<sup>r</sup>, 137<sup>r</sup>. Both sentences were for twenty years, while Boncianni's included his sons and descendants and his property was also confiscated.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid., f. 78<sup>r</sup>; Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 139.

<sup>258</sup> Brown, *Public Opinion*, pp. 70, 72.

<sup>259</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Dialogo*, p. 263.

<sup>260</sup> Parenti, *Storia*, ed. Matucci, i, pp. 70, 72, 82.

<sup>261</sup> See Appendix A, xii.

<sup>262</sup> Marzi, *Cancellaria*, p. 235.

<sup>263</sup> *Provvisoni concernenti l'ordinamento della repubblica fiorentina, 1494-1512*, ed. G. Cadoni, (in progress) i (Rome 1994), pp. 8, 38-57.

The exceptions were the plot of 1497, a small majority of whose leaders, and of their accomplices, were from ordinary families in the major guilds, and the plot of 1513, whose two leaders were both noble, but obscure men in political terms.

The most important distinction to be drawn between those conspirators who sought to establish a regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant and those who sought the re-establishment of the past regime was that between those who were in or out of power. Those plots that sought to establish a regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant were the work of discontented former supporters of the regime. In most cases they or their fathers were prominent or leading members of the regime which they sought to overthrow. Most plots were the work of those who had always desired the re-establishment of the past regime. Those involved were mostly from families outside the ruling circles of the regime they were attempting to overthrow. In many cases they or their fathers had been prominent or leading citizens of the past regime which they sought to re-establish, while others shared long-standing bonds of loyalty to those thrown out of power. They sought to return to power and to avenge their overthrow and all that they had suffered on account of their opposition to the regime. To that extent political conflict in Florence was the conflict between those in power and those thrown out of it.

Outside the ruling circles as they were however, there is no sense that those who conspired to re-establish the past regime would not have done so had they been able to find a place in government. They, or in some cases their fathers, had loyally supported the past regime until its overthrow and desired its re-establishment ever since. Moreover, amongst the loyal supporters of the past regime involved in both the *parlamento* of 1512 and the *Tumulto del Venerdi* there were those whose fathers were prominent and leading members of the present regime. This was the background of Prinzivalle della Stufa, the protagonist of the plot of 1510. Plots thus testified not only to the failure of both popular and Medicean regimes to crush loyal supporters of the past regime, but also to the failure and even futility of attempts to accommodate them. Plots demonstrated other failures too, as we shall see, in the ways in which regimes treated not only their enemies, but also their friends, failures

which not only encouraged plots against the regime, but also contributed to their success.

## Friends and Enemies

Almost all plots were the work of well-known opponents of the regime, suspected of waiting for the opportunity to work for its overthrow. The only exceptions were Buondelmonti and his associates from the Rucellai gardens in 1522,<sup>1</sup> and those who conspired with Filippo Strozzi in 1526/7. Even the leaders of the plot of 1513, Boscoli and Capponi, as well as Giovanni Folchi, were all citizens under suspicion,<sup>2</sup> on a list of *nemici* drawn up before the discovery of the plot, hatched just two months after the Medici returned to the city.<sup>3</sup> Most plots might thus be seen as the result of the failure of regimes to crush their opponents. One reason for that was the belief that attempting to accommodate opponents was the better way to secure the regime. Soderini's failure to deal ruthlessly with the earlier hostile activities of those responsible for his overthrow was due at least in part to the belief, as Machiavelli argued, that he could overcome their enmity with patience and clemency, and it further appears that he had also sought to conciliate some of them with benefits and reward.

Contemporaries also blamed the overthrow of the Medici on mistaken attempts to conciliate opponents with benefits and rewards, not least because it resulted in the neglect of their supporters, who were thus neither inclined nor forced to defend the regime. It has been an argument made more recently too that while repression of the *piagnoni* was more harsh after 1523, the Medici's indiscriminating efforts to bind their opponents to the regime with ties of interest and obligation succeeded only in furnishing their enemies with the means of protection and survival and thus contributed directly to their overthrow.<sup>4</sup> Amongst those who conspired

<sup>1</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 88; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> Vettori, 'Sommaro', p. 295.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix A, xii.

<sup>4</sup> Polizzotto, 'Medici', pp. 136-40, 145-50.

against the Medici there were a few long-standing opponents, most notably Niccolò Capponi, whom the Medici had sought to benefit. Yet almost all of those well-known and listed opponents condemned for verbal offences, involved in plots and at the forefront of the *Tumulto* had endured exclusion and persecution since 1512. To that extent plots and other violent attacks against the Medici regime were the result of the failure of the Medici to crush their opponents despite attempts to do so.

On their return in 1512 the Medici had been urged by their partisans to banish opponents as their ancestors had done in 1434, and on their return in 1530 Clement was to ensure that over a hundred of the most vociferous supporters of the last republic were ruthlessly banished, imprisoned and executed.<sup>5</sup> Yet in 1512, as had the popular government in 1494, the Medici had sought to conciliate those closely associated with the past regime with a policy of clemency towards them, protecting them from the desire of some to banish them and confiscate their possessions. Plots vindicated those who criticized that clemency, to the extent that they were largely the work of those thrown out of power and their loyal supporters, who had supported and defended the past regime until its overthrow and sought its restoration ever since. However, plots also demonstrated the wisdom of the policy of clemency pursued in both 1494 and 1512, for on both occasions it succeeded in conciliating most supporters of the past regime, at least to the point that they felt no need to risk their lives in actively pursuing the overthrow of the government, and thus left conspirators, as they were well aware, somewhat isolated.

Plots, as well as other acts against the regime, also demonstrated the serious consequences that could arise from the persecution of opponents or its threat. The *parlamento* in 1512 was in large part the result of the desire of partisans of the Medici to secure themselves from the persecution by the *frateschi* that they feared would ensue if the settlement of 7 September was allowed to remain in place. Nevertheless, as the Medici were more ruthless in 1530 than they had been in 1512, so the popular government was more ruthless in 1527 than it had been in 1494. That was to have as equally serious consequences as the errors of Soderini it was intended

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<sup>5</sup> Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 335-6; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 238-9.

to avoid. For it drove leading citizens such as Francesco Guicciardini and Francesco Vettori to join the Pope against the city at the beginning of the siege in 1529, and then to be instrumental in persuading him against abandoning the siege altogether.

Guicciardini once observed that where the maintenance of popular government, being a broad regime, depended on its ability to preserve the security of all citizens, the maintenance of the Medici regime, being narrow, depended on its ability to preserve the loyalty of its supporters.<sup>6</sup> The failure of Medici to satisfy the honour and expectations of their supporters not only ensured that their supporters sought to join the revolt in 1527 rather than defend the regime, but in 1522 and 1526 resulted directly in plots against them. It was the desire to avenge injuries and insults from the Medici that precipitated the conspiracy of 1522 and drove Filippo Strozzi to plot in 1526. Conspirators against Lorenzo in the fifteenth century, in 1478 and 1481, had also been moved by the desire to avenge injuries from the Medici.<sup>7</sup> The main difference after 1512 was that where the injuries to the Pazzi, for example, were the result of a deliberate attempt by Lorenzo to humble a rival family with the open desire to compete with the Medici,<sup>8</sup> those to Strozzi and the conspirators of 1522 were injuries to supporters of the regime. They were mostly the result of the Medici's failure to satisfy the competing demands of their supporters, and particularly to meet the expectations aroused by their elevation to the Papacy. Plots thus demonstrate the extent to which the Medici's possession of the Papacy, and the expectations aroused by it, threatened the security of the regime in Florence.

Thus there were a number of ways in which plots demonstrated the various successes and failures with which popular governments and the Medici treated their supporters and opponents. This has not been recognized before now. Indeed there has been no attempt to examine the relationship even between particular plots and the treatment by regimes of their supporters and opponents, although the reasons for the flight of Guicciardini and Vettori to the Pope during the siege are now well-known.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Scritti politici*, pp. 287-8; 'Ricordi', C. 21.

<sup>7</sup> Brown, 'Public Opinion', pp. 63-4.

<sup>8</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Dialogo*, pp. 30-1, 75; Idem, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 31-2.

<sup>9</sup> Rossi, *Guicciardini*, i, pp. 138-64; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 209-220; Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 204-5, 241-2.

Yet an examination of conspiracies and other acts against the regime provides the clearest illustration of the success and failure with which regimes treated friends and enemies.

During the last republic, according to Guicciardini, those who demanded the ruthless persecution of former supporters of the Medici regime recalled the clemency with which the Medici's supporters had been treated in 1494, and that their loyalties had remained unchanged, despite the honours accorded them in the popular government.<sup>10</sup> The plot of 1497 was certainly to provide the clearest evidence of the failure of the amnesty of 1495 to conciliate supporters of the Medici to the popular government. For as a result of their support for Piero before 1494, the plotters were foremost amongst the targets of popular anger in the aftermath of Piero's departure. Ridolfi and del Nero are reported to have been two 'partisans' who in the hours after Piero's exit entered the Piazza on horseback with an armed company crying 'popolo e libertà' in order to lessen the 'burden of blame' (*carico*) upon them, but they were thrown back and chased as 'suspetti', in danger of their lives.<sup>11</sup> That night, as efforts were made to seize 'adherents' of Piero's regime, Pucci left the city in secret, and Tornabuoni went into hiding.<sup>12</sup> Francesco Cegia recorded how his house had been threatened with the sack, from which it was only saved through the efforts of Francesco Valori, and how, as a 'servant' of Piero, he too had hidden. Having answered a summons to appear before the *Signoria* he was detained for ten days during which he had 'the greatest fears', before being freed 'through the love of God and of the King of France'.<sup>13</sup>

Ridolfi, Alamanni, and del Nero are also recorded to have been protected by some of those in the magistracies from the popular anger against them as close supporters of Piero, and the desire of some to have them exiled or deprived of the ability to hold office.<sup>14</sup> Suspicion of them was such that on 14 November the arms of

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<sup>10</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 238.

<sup>11</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 98; Parenti, *Storia*, ed. Matucci, i, p. 125.

<sup>12</sup> Landucci, *Diario*, p. 77; Parenti, *Storia*, ed. Matucci, i, p. 126.

<sup>13</sup> Cegia, 'Ricordi', p. 197.

<sup>14</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 96, f. 87<sup>v</sup> (10 November 1494); Parenti, *Storia*, ed. Matucci, i, pp. 128-9; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 98.



del Nero, Ridolfi, Tornabuoni and others were confiscated,<sup>15</sup> but the desire of many citizens following the *parlamento* in December to 'beat upon' particularly those three as well as other 'citizens of the old regime' was opposed by Piero Capponi and Francesco Valori, the two main leaders of the overthrow of the regime.<sup>16</sup>

Valori and Capponi had both been supporters of the Medici and they sought to protect the *bigi*, according to Guicciardini, partly because they feared that once those of the 'old regime' had been expelled, they themselves would be at the mercy of those excluded by the Medici since 1434, who were naturally their enemies.<sup>17</sup> Niccolò Valori, Francesco's nephew, recorded that affairs were managed 'with the utmost clemency' in order not to 'divide or harm the city' which would have happened 'if we had proceeded too vigorously', because in sixty years at the head of the regime the Medici 'had made so many friends' that 'one would have had to punish too great a number of men'.<sup>18</sup> It was this thinking, supported by Savonarola, that led in March 1495 to a provision granting amnesty to those who had been 'supporters' of the Medicean regime on account of anything they may have done concerning that regime, except the theft of public money.<sup>19</sup> While the plot demonstrated the failure of such attempts to conciliate supporters of the Medici regime, it also demonstrated its success, at least in isolating the conspirators from those supporters of the Medici who saw no need to work for Piero's return. Thus Giovanni Cambi, one of the leaders of the plot, had remarked that twenty-five or thirty of Piero's supporters would need to be banished before the Medici could return to Florence.<sup>20</sup>

Machiavelli and others argued that Soderini had been overthrown on account of his mistaken belief that he could extinguish the enmity and 'envy' of his opponents with 'time', 'goodness', 'patience', 'fortune' and, in some cases, with 'benefiting' them with 'rewards'.<sup>21</sup> Soderini had not known, according to

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<sup>15</sup> Parenti, *Storia*, ed. Matucci, i, p. 130.

<sup>16</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 107.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 12<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> *Provvisioni*, i, pp. 111-8.

<sup>20</sup> 'Processo di Lamberto dell' Antella', p. xvi.

<sup>21</sup> Machiavelli, 'Discorsi', III iii, and III xxx, *Opere* (1954), pp. 316, 388.

Machiavelli, that 'goodness is not enough, fortune varies' and 'malice is a not a woman placated by time or gifts', and thus he had failed to 'kill the sons of Brutus' and been thrown out of power.<sup>22</sup> Partisans of the Medici urged them to treat their enemies as Cosimo had done on his return in 1434, arguing that Soderini's failure to crush his opponents had led to his overthrow in 1512.<sup>23</sup> Those who called during the last republic for the ruthless persecution of former members of the Medici regime argued, according to Guicciardini, that Soderini had been overthrown because he had 'tolerated' his most dangerous opponents, particularly Bernardo Rucellai, when there was no clear evidence of wrong doing, rather than seeking, as he should have done, to treat them ruthlessly on the grounds of suspicion alone. That would have averted future troubles by dealing with them at their origins, 'as was necessary in matters of state', and thus the ruthless treatment of one or two individuals would have assured the security of the regime.<sup>24</sup>

We have already seen how Soderini's failure to deal ruthlessly with his opponents had led to his overthrow not least because it had meant that the earlier activities of those responsible, in the Rucellai gardens, in public visits to the Medici in Rome, and in the Strozzi-Medici marriage alliance, had gone unpunished. Soderini had been unable as much as unwilling to take action against them but it does seem as if he had sought to overcome the enmity of at least some of those responsible for his overthrow not only with patience, but also with rewards, a fact little emphasized in modern accounts.<sup>25</sup>

Soderini certainly seems to have believed, as Guicciardini recorded, that proceeding ruthlessly against Rucellai and other opponents purely on the grounds of their discontent would serve only to turn their discontent into despair, and force those opponents who would not otherwise actively seek the overthrow of the regime into doing so, out of 'fear' and 'necessity'.<sup>26</sup> Cerretani noted how the first to attack the Gonfalonier were those who had been helped by him.<sup>27</sup> Nardi mentions that the

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 317, 388.

<sup>23</sup> Butters, *Governors*, p. 271.

<sup>24</sup> F. Guicciardini, 'Oratoria accusatoria', *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 230.

<sup>25</sup> Some brief remarks are made in Butters, *Governors*, p. 164.

<sup>26</sup> F. Guicciardini, 'Oratoria accusatoria', *Scritti autobiografici*, p. 230.

<sup>27</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 48.

leaders of Soderini's overthrow were relatives of the Gonfalonier whom he had privately benefited, particularly Bartolomeo Valori, husband of his niece,<sup>28</sup> and Strozzi and Nerli reported that Albizzi and Vettori had both drawn close to Soderini, the better to deceive him.<sup>29</sup> Yet as early as 1506 Albizzi and Valori were both well-known opponents of the Gonfalonier, had openly consorted with the Medici in Rome, and were suspected of wishing to overthrow the regime, and Valori had been one of Soderini's 'principal enemies', according to Guicciardini, when a Prior in 1508.<sup>30</sup> By 1512 however, Soderini certainly seems to have believed that he could trust them, a fatal error as it turned out, and thus it was that Albizzi, Valori and Vettori were not, as the Rucellai were, amongst those detained in the Palace as the Viceroy approached Prato.

Soderini was overthrown because he had failed to deal ruthlessly with his opponents and kill the sons of Brutus, and one reason for that was his belief, mistaken as it turned out, that he could overcome their enmity and conciliate them to the regime. The *parlamento* that followed however, was to illustrate the serious consequences of persecuting opponents, and the dangers posed to the regime by those threatened with persecution. For fear of persecution seems to have been the main reason why partisans of the Medici urged the forcing of a *parlamento* in September 1512, and why Cardinal Giovanni agreed to it. This deserves to be examined in some detail, for it has been almost completely ignored in modern accounts, yet was considered to be of central importance by contemporaries in all their accounts of the event.<sup>31</sup> Buonaccorsi for example wrote that having returned as private citizens the Medici and their supporters had not judged themselves to be 'secure' with the way of government as it was and thus decided to make a *parlamento*.<sup>32</sup>

According to contemporary accounts, it was the need to secure themselves from the persecution they feared from their enemies that was the very basis of the argument with which partisans urged and finally persuaded the Medici to overthrow

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<sup>28</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 496; *Ibid.*, ii, p. 15.

<sup>29</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', p. 107; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 98.

<sup>30</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 306.

<sup>31</sup> The issue is mentioned only briefly by Butters, *Governors*, pp. 180, 181; Stephens, *Fall*, p. 60; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 68-9, 73.

<sup>32</sup> Buonaccorsi, *Diario*, p. 184.

the regime based on the Great Council, and establish one in which they were dominant. Francesco Vettori later recalled that Medici partisans had persuaded Cardinal Giovanni to force the *parlamento* and seize control of the government arguing that 'otherwise they and their friends were in danger', and their persuasions were such, Vettori wrote, that they 'pushed the Cardinal to do that which perhaps he would not have done'.<sup>33</sup> Francesco Baldovinetti, a supporter of the Medici, gives a more detailed account of the argument of the partisans in his unpublished *Memoriale*:<sup>34</sup>

The Medici worried that some harm would befall them in the city, which was also said to them by their friends, who showed them the danger they were in if the Spanish left, for having in part acted against the *popolo* and shown themselves to be against the regime, and that from that Council the Medici and their followers would never have office, and that this was said throughout the city, and that it was of necessity to secure both themselves and their friends by seizing the Palace to their devotion, abolishing that Council, and making the *Signoria*, *Colleges*, *Otto* and *Dieci* as they saw fit, *a mano* ...

The Medici duly obliged their friends, according to Baldovinetti 'moved by true reasons and to secure themselves in the city'. As did Baldovinetti, both Cerretani and Nerli emphasized the partisans' fears that it was only the presence of the Spanish army near the city which protected them from their enemies, and that thus they would be 'banished from Florence with their total ruin' once the Spanish left.<sup>35</sup> As did Baldovinetti, Nerli described how those who had shown themselves opposed to the popular regime wanted a *parlamento* for their 'security' believing that the *popolo* would not forgive them, and that they would thus have no share of the government in a 'free and large regime'.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Vettori, 'Sommario', p. 293.

<sup>34</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 156<sup>v</sup>: 'i detti Medici dubitassino loro non chapitare male nella cipta che fussi anche loro detto da loro amici e mostrarono loro il pericholo se gli Spagnuoli se andavano che portavano per avere in parte fatto chontro al popolo ed essersi scoperto chontro al detto vivere e che da quello chonsiglio detti Medici e loro seguici non avrebbono mai uficii e che chosi si diceva per tutta la cipta e che gli era di necessità da sichurarsi loro e loro amici chol pigliare il Palazzo alloro divotione e chassare detto chonsiglio e fare la Signoria, Chollegghi, Otto e Dieci a mano alloro proposito e governarsi a modo e nel modo di Lorenzo loro padre di che i detti Medici mossi dalle vere ragioni ...'

<sup>35</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, p. 48; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 114.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

It was as a result of these fears that Nerli explained the desire of partisans of the Medici for a *parlamento* expressed during the *pratiche* on the reform of the constitution in the days following the overthrow of Soderini.<sup>37</sup> According also to Cerretani, the fear amongst some of those involved in the overthrow of Soderini that 'some harm would befall' them, given the quality of the 'parte fratesca', was apparent as soon as Soderini departed the city, and was the reason why they immediately sought to persuade the Medici to head a new regime.<sup>38</sup> This is confirmed by a letter of Filippo Strozzi written on 4 September during the discussions on reform. 'Those who have greatly revealed themselves in this affair', he reported, 'do not believe they will remain secure if the government does not change and press much for a *parlamento*.'<sup>39</sup>

The reform of 7 September seems only to have heightened the fears of partisans, although the Medici agreed to it, and according to Cerretani it was intended to provide for the 'security' of the Medici, while maintaining the Great Council.<sup>40</sup> Following the election that day of opponents of the Medici as the first twenty-one members of the new Senate, the young partisans who had taken up arms to guard the Palace following Soderini's departure immediately concluded that the reforms as they stood did not offer enough 'security' for themselves or the Medici, and thus, according to Cerretani, for their 'security' they persuaded Giuliano to request the addition of a further one hundred men drawn from the Medici's supporters.<sup>41</sup>

The next day saw the election as Gonfalonier of Giovanbattista Ridolfi, a leading member of the *frateschi*, which Nerli and Cerretani recalled brought 'terror' to the Medici's partisans.<sup>42</sup> Giovanni Rucellai and other young *palleschi* saw in Ridolfi's election and his dismissal of their guard on the Palace 'the ambassadors of their ruin', according to Cerretani, and believed they were in 'danger' because once the Spanish left, they and the Medici would be left at the 'discretion' of their 'enemies', whose leader was now Gonfalonier. Thus they renewed pressure for a

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 111-2.

<sup>38</sup> Cerretani, *Dialogo*, pp. 48-9.

<sup>39</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi., Ser. III, 178, f. 69<sup>r</sup>: Filippo to Lorenzo Strozzi, 4 September 1512.

<sup>40</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 281; Idem, *Storia*, p. 444; Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 49.

<sup>41</sup> Idem, *Storia*, p. 444; Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 50.

<sup>42</sup> Idem, *Storia*, p. 444; Nerli, *Commentari*, pp. 114-5.

*parlamento*, telling the Cardinal that they were in ‘greater danger than before’, that ‘the past regime was stronger than before’, and that ‘the *piagnoni* would chase them out again’.<sup>43</sup>

It was with this ‘singular’ argument above all, according to Cerretani, that *palleschi* continued to press for a *parlamento* over the next week until they persuaded the Medici of the ‘danger’ they were in, of the ‘harm that would befall them and their friends’, and that they could not enjoy ‘security’ unless they forced the establishment of a *Balia* and a new regime.<sup>44</sup> If the partisans had found another way to secure themselves according to Cerretani, they would have agreed to it, but ‘one never found a way’.<sup>45</sup> On the day before the *parlamento*, according to Parenti, Giuliano spoke at length with the Gonfalonier about the government and the ‘security’ of the Medici.<sup>46</sup> When Giuliano and the young partisans took over the Palace by force they were asked what they desired, according to Nardi, and replied ‘with one voice’ that they desired ‘proper security’.<sup>47</sup>

A letter of Niccolò Pandolfini written to the Cardinal from Rome three days before the *parlamento* confirms the representation of the argument of the partisans given by Baldovinetti, Cerretani and others. Bemoaning the creation of the Gonfalonier and the ‘hotchpotch’ (*guazzabuglio*) of the Senate ‘packed with *piagnoni* and the other friends of Soderini’, and supporters of the Great Council, Pandolfini warned that if matters were not ‘remedied and firmly taken in hand’, neither the League nor the Cardinal nor his supporters would be able to ‘remain secure in that regime’, which ‘every day would become more settled and more nasty’ and when the Spanish left, would come to have ‘so much license’ that shortly the Medici and their friends would encounter some ‘great difficulties’.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 282; Idem, *Storia*, p. 445; Idem, *Dialogo*, p. 51.

<sup>44</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 282, 283, 285; Idem, *Storia*, pp. 445-7; Idem, *Dialogo*, pp. 53, 54, 57.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>46</sup> Parenti, ‘*Storia*’, II IV 171, f. 80<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 7.

<sup>48</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., LXVII, n. 32: Niccolò Pandolfini to Cardinal Giovanni de’ Medici, 13 September 1512, ‘si sono ristretti di piagnoni e li altri amici di Soderini e così e popolari perchè si abbia amorevolmente loro el Grande Consiglio e se non si remedia et vivamente fermandosi le cose ... nè la Lega, nè la Vostra Reverendissima, nè li amici di quella hanno a potere restare securi in cotesto stato, quale ogni di diventerebbe più resto e più traverso e partendosi le gente d’ arme si verrebbe aver tanta licentia che in breve sarebbe .. qualche grande inconveniente’.

The fears of the partisans were not only real, they were also well founded. Guicciardini wrote that the Medici, as their partisans knew, would not have found it tolerable as private citizens since they were hated by everyone for the sack of Prato and for bringing the Spanish army to the city gates and would have been continually suspected by other citizens of making some attempt against liberty.<sup>49</sup> Lorenzo Strozzi recalled that the fearful response of the partisans to the election of Ridolfi was caused by the 'many vain and hateful words' spoken against them by the 'multitude'.<sup>50</sup> Cerretani described how the partisans' fear that the reforms of 7 September and Ridolfi's election would lead to their destruction was a response to the threats made by many *frateschi* and 'enemies of the Medici' concerning what they would do once the Spanish left.<sup>51</sup> Thus even *frateschi*, according to Cerretani, could agree that the forcing of the *parlamento* was not to be 'marvelled at', because the Medici and their partisans were driven to it by 'necessity'.<sup>52</sup>

A good illustration of the fate which partisans of the Medici feared would befall them unless the Medici seized control of the regime, and the reasons for it, is provided by the experience which even in the months after the *parlamento*, Paolo Vettori nevertheless had to suffer. In April 1513 his brother, Francesco, reported that Paolo had received a heavy imposition of taxes which Francesco believed was on account of his brother's role in the overthrow of Soderini, which harmed him greatly because 'all those who were friends of that regime wish Paolo harm'.<sup>53</sup> In August 1513 Francesco wrote to Paolo informing him that he had told Giulio de' Medici of the persecution he had suffered on account of his role in the overthrow of Soderini and then the *parlamento*:<sup>54</sup>

<sup>49</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 234.

<sup>50</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', p. xxxi.

<sup>51</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 447; Idem, *Dialogo*, pp. 50, 51.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>53</sup> Machiavelli, *Lettere*, p. 373: Francesco Vettori to Niccolò Machiavelli, 21 April 1513.

<sup>54</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. I., 136, f. 219<sup>v</sup>: Francesco to Paolo Vettori, 5 August 1513, 'chi te haveva di quel tempo in qua potuto offendere colla graveza l' havea facto perchè nel gonfalone nostro non è il più dishonesto arbitrio che quello habbiamo noi, e li altri loro amici erono suti riguardati. Nelle cause civili havevi mosse o alla Mercantia o all' Arte havevi havuto la sententia contro, havendo mille ragione, chi haveva il tuo nelle mani a Lione, a Brugia e a Londra non te lo voleva restituire et in effecto ciascuno ti faceva il peggio poteva'. A transcription of this letter can be found in R. J. F. Hughes, 'Francesco Vettori: his place in Florentine Diplomacy and Politics' (London University Ph.D. thesis, 1958), pp. 571-3.

from that time until now those who had been able to hurt you with taxes had done it, because in our *gonfalone* there is no more dishonest imposition than the one that we have had, and the other friends of the Medici had been regarded. In the civil actions you had brought either at the *Mercantia* or at the Guild, you had had the sentence against you, when you had had a thousand reasons in your favour; those who had your goods in their hands in Lyons, in Bruges and in London were unwilling to restore them to you, and in effect everyone was doing the worst to you that they could ...

Francesco wrote that he had explained to Giulio that Paolo was suffering in this way not just because he was hated by the Soderini and their friends for his part in Piero Soderini's overthrow, but also because his relatives, unlike those of the two others most involved, Bartolomeo Valori and Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, were unable and unwilling to protect him, and thus he was in the greater danger:<sup>55</sup>

of you three ... none was more hated by them [the Soderini] and their friends than you and none was in more danger, because Bartolomeo was their relative and hurting him they were hurting their sister and progeny. Antonfrancesco had great and powerful relatives, that is there are a hundred men in his family, Giovanbattista [Ridolfi] is his father-in-law, and in fact everyone would be wary of bringing an action against him, but you were left with few relatives and those were ill-disposed and discontented with you, some with respect to Piero Soderini and some to the *parlamento* ...

Thus, as Francesco informed Paolo, he had asked Giulio to protect him, explaining to Giulio that it was 'necessary he helped you extraordinarily, and beyond deeds, were needed demonstrations'.<sup>56</sup> Only the extraordinary help of the Medici could protect Paolo from the hostility of the Soderini and their friends, but Valori's marriage to a daughter of Paolantonio Soderini,<sup>57</sup> and Albizzi's to the daughter of the head of the *frateschi*, whose election as Gonfalonier so frightened partisans of the Medici,<sup>58</sup> ensured their security. Where Vettori was dependant on the Medici for protection, Valori and Albizzi were not, and this difference must have been one of

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.: 'di voi tre .. nessuno era più odiato dalloro e dalli amici di te e nessuno portava più pericholo, perchè Bartolomeo era loro parente et offendendolo offendevano la sorella e nipoti. Antonfrancesco era d' un parentado grande chè in casa sono huomini cento, ha per suocero Giovambatista et ne ffacto ognuno andrebbe andagio a tocharlo, ma tu restavi cho non molti parenti et quelli mali disposti et male contenti di te, che respecto a Piero Soderini, e chi al parlamento'.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 17 (Valori), tav. ii.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., disp. 180 (Albizzi), tav. xix.



the main reasons why Paolo supported the *parlamento*, where Albizzi and Valori, as we have seen, opposed it.

While the Medici heeded the calls of their supporters for security in 1512, they prevented their partisans from pursuing the vengeful persecution of their opponents. As did the plot of 1497 so the plot of 1513 provides the clearest evidence of the failure of the regime's attempts to conciliate its opponents, not least through the involvement of Cosimo de' Pazzi. Cardinal Giovanni had agreed to Pazzi's request for the appointment of his father, Guglielmo, as Gonfalonier, despite the fierce opposition from Medici supporters on account of the Pazzi family's public hostility to the *parlamento*.<sup>59</sup> The Cardinal had asked Giuliano to get assurances from the Archbishop that he would point his father in the 'right direction' (*bona via*), if Guglielmo's 'nature' should cause him to stray from it.<sup>60</sup>

Yet like the plot of 1497, the plot of 1513 testified to the wisdom and success of attempts to conciliate supporters of popular government at least in isolating implacable opponents of the regime. Giovanni Folchi, who had had a petition concerning his inheritance granted by the *Balia* in October 1512,<sup>61</sup> and refused to join the plot, told Boscoli that the foremost reason he believed that Giuliano and the regime were very secure, was because of the 'kindness' (*benignità*) of the Medici, since following their return to power they 'never did harm to anyone'.<sup>62</sup>

Yet the Medici were under pressure from their partisans to treat opponents with more ruthlessness, which Niccolò Valori, condemned for his involvement in the plot, felt acutely. Shortly after being released from his sentence on the occasion of the elevation of Cardinal Giovanni to the Papacy in March 1513 Valori described in his *Ricordanze* the desire for plunder and revenge that he had perceived in the Medici and some of their supporters since their return:<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 296.

<sup>60</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozz., Ser. II, 86, f. 225<sup>r</sup>: Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici to Giulio and Giuliano de' Medici, 15 December 1512.

<sup>61</sup> A.S.F., Balie, 43, f. 61<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., LXXXIX, n. 38: Examination of Giovanni Folchi.

<sup>63</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 17<sup>v</sup>: 'in vero da natura erano benigni, ma i disordini che contrarono con uno debito incredibile e con havere promisso il forte dello stato nostro e molto più per havere intorno huomini rovinati, gli sforzava e covava di natura e sempre cercavano occasioni di potere vendicarsi e

[The Medici] in truth were benign by nature, but the disorders that they had incurred with an incredible debt and with having promised the strength of our state, and much more for having around them ruined men, were forcing and pulling them from their nature and they were always seeking occasions to be able to avenge themselves and banish all those who loved liberty, or who had some possessions that could feed both them and a very great multitude of bankrupts and the poverty-stricken they had around them.

Valori believed that he was a particular target of the Medici supporters' desire for vengeance on account of his family's role in the execution of the conspirators in 1497. The Valori, he recorded, had been supporters of the Medici but opposed them as soon as they saw that the Medici 'aspired to tyranny and domination',<sup>64</sup> yet his paternal uncle, Francesco, having 'freed the city' in 1494, had afterwards 'wished that no friend or relative of the Medici suffer in anything, thinking that liberty had to please them so much that they would never more look to tyrants'. Nevertheless a 'few friends' of the Medici had 'conspired against liberty and the popular regime', for which five were decapitated.<sup>65</sup>

Francesco Valori, leader of the *frateschi*, was the man most responsible for the execution of the five leaders of the plot of 1497,<sup>66</sup> and thus it was, as Niccolò explained, that Francesco, 'true liberator of his country' was killed soon after by that 'same faction', friends of the Medici, with part of the *popolo*, 'always desirous of new things' and 'persons of little judgement'. Niccolò himself later rose to a position of authority and thus, as he explained, because the city's foreign enemies were using the Medici for their 'instrument', he had 'many times to add new enmities to the past matters.'<sup>67</sup>

As Guicciardini recorded, Valori was certainly amongst a group of citizens in 1508 who had been 'enemies' of the Medici for some time and never reconciled with them, and who supported Soderini's attempts to take action against those involved in

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mandarne tutti quelli che amavano la libertà, o, havevano qualche substantia da potere pascere e loro e una moltitudine grandissima di falliti et malistanti haveano intorno.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., f. 12<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., f. 17<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>66</sup> Parenti, 'Storia' ed. Schnitzer, p. 211; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 140, 142, 144; Cerretani, *Storia*, pp. 238-9.

<sup>67</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 17<sup>r</sup>.

the Strozzi-Medici marriage alliance for conspiring against the regime.<sup>68</sup> The group was known as 'la setta valoriana' because its members, who also included Alessandro Acciaiuoli and Pierfrancesco Tosinghi, had all been 'adherents' of Francesco Valori,<sup>69</sup> and it was fear of persecution by the Medici that was one reason why Niccolò Valori and the others in this group were amongst Soderini's closest supporters,<sup>70</sup> and did all they could in August 1512 to keep the Medici out of Florence.<sup>71</sup> Valori recalled telling Soderini as an orator to the Viceroy that since the Medici could not remain private citizens their return would put the regime and 'for us, our lives' in their hands, and records that following the agreement by which the Medici returned to Florence he would have fled the city, but for his wife and children.<sup>72</sup>

It may be that fear of persecution was one reason why Valori got involved in the plot, although Valori himself sought only to explain that it was the desire of the Medici's supporters for revenge which lay behind the 'most cruel and unjust judgement' by which he was sentenced to two years imprisonment in the fortress of Volterra and exiled for life to Città di Castello. It was unjust, he argued, because while he had not revealed the plot, he had sought to dissuade Boscoli from his plans, and believed that he had thus 'saved two lives at one stroke', those of both Boscoli and his intended victim, Giuliano de' Medici.<sup>73</sup>

The plot of 1513 testified to the failure of the Medici's attempts, despite their wider success, to conciliate all implacable opponents with clemency and even rewards, not least perhaps because of the continual threat to opponents posed by their partisans. The plot of 1522 however, was the result of the failure of the Medici to satisfy the demands and expectations of their supporters. This has been ignored in modern accounts, and Ammirato's later descriptions of the injuries that the conspirators sought to avenge were rejected by Alamanni's biographer, without the

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<sup>68</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 326.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 328.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 272.

<sup>71</sup> Tosinghi was a commissioner of Florentine forces in the field, Acciaiuoli the commander of troops guarding the the city's gates, Guasti, ed., *Sacco di Prato*, ii, p. 10; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 278.

<sup>72</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 17<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 18<sup>r-v</sup>.

benefit of much new evidence, and unaware that they were based on contemporary accounts.<sup>74</sup>

Brucioli lamented in 1526 that the Cardinal had never rewarded Jacopo da Diacceto with the position merited by his learning and literary talents,<sup>75</sup> and Nardi recalled that da Diacceto was said at the time to have felt 'slighted' (*sdegnato*) at not having been made Chancellor after the death of Marcello Adriani.<sup>76</sup> Both Cerretani and Cambi record the injuries which contemporaries, including Cambi himself, believed had moved the two leaders of the plot, Zanobi Buondelmonti and Luigi Alamanni, the poet. Alamanni had been arrested at the beginning of 1522 for carrying arms which had filled him with so much 'resentment' (*sdegnio*), according to Cambi, that he had plotted to kill the Cardinal.<sup>77</sup> A disagreement over the ownership of a benefice between Zanobi and his kinsman, Benedetto, had resulted in Benedetto giving Zanobi a 'slap' (*ceffata*). Cardinal Giulio, unable to make a peace between them, had made a truce by which Benedetto was banished from Florence for a period. Within a short time however, the Cardinal had wanted Benedetto to return to the city and had him given leave to do so, and thus for this 'slight' (*sdegnio*), according to Cambi, Zanobi was moved to plot.<sup>78</sup>

Cambi and other contemporaries who believed that the reasons for the plot were the causes of 'resentment' (*sdegnio*) the two leaders had for the Cardinal, emphasized that the aim of the plot was to kill the Cardinal with the 'design of appearing to desire to free their country'.<sup>79</sup> Cerretani believed that despite the truth of the personal 'resentments' (*sdegni*) these had not been all that had precipitated the plot, and indeed he judged that the aim of the conspirators had been to 'free the city from the servitude of the Cardinal de' Medici and his followers' and that they had been moved more by the vanity of glory than 'by hatred'.<sup>80</sup> Nardi also wrote that the conspirators had been moved not by any hatred for the Cardinal but only by the

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<sup>74</sup> Hauvette, *Luigi Alamanni*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>75</sup> Brucioli, *Dialogi*, p. 269.

<sup>76</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 89.

<sup>77</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 203; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 407.

<sup>78</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 202-3; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 407.

<sup>79</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 201, 202-3.

<sup>80</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 407-8.

desire to 'free their country', but he is quite wrong to argue that they did so knowing that the Cardinal's plans for reform were a fiction.<sup>81</sup> Buondelmonti, as we have seen, believed the contrary, and there can be no doubt that it was his desire to avenge the injury from Benedetto and the Cardinal that precipitated and drove the plot. Luigi Alamanni, the soldier, is recorded to have confessed that when Buondelmonti recruited him he had told him that 'I want to kill Benedetto Buondelmonti, my enemy, and I want you to kill the Cardinal'.<sup>82</sup>

Correspondence recently brought to light from both Benedetto and his father to in March 1521,<sup>83</sup> by which they hoped to present to the Pope their version of the disagreement with Zanobi and excuse Benedetto's resort to physical violence, confirm the fact and extent of the enmity between the two kinsmen.<sup>84</sup> The records of the *Otto di Guardia* reveal that they supervised the truce between Zanobi and Benedetto in April 1521, and that Benedetto was banished from the dominion for one year.<sup>85</sup> They also confirm that Benedetto was allowed to return to the city long before the end of the term of his exile by means of successive commandments by the *Otto* to present himself in the city.<sup>86</sup> The first such commandment, in September 1521, was no doubt partly the work of Benedetto's father, Filippo, who was a member of the *Otto* which began its term in that month.<sup>87</sup>

The Cardinal's favour to Benedetto was to prove a drastic error of judgement, made in the mistaken belief that having failed to persuade Zanobi to consent that Benedetto could return to the city, Zanobi would be no danger if he had Benedetto return anyway.<sup>88</sup> Yet Zanobi was to prove a dangerous man, and his violent disagreement with his kinsman was a dangerous one in which to intervene.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 89.

<sup>82</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 406.

<sup>83</sup> R. Bizzocchi, 'La dissoluzione di un clan familiare: I Buondelmonti di Firenze nei secoli xv e xvi', *A.S.I.*, cxl (1982), pp. 37-39.

<sup>84</sup> A.S.F., Mss. Torrigiani, III, ins. 21, F: Benedetto Buondelmonti to Piero Ardinghelli, 27 March 1521; Filippo Buondelmonti to Pope Leo X, 30 March 1521.

<sup>85</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 179, f. 80<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 181, ff. 4<sup>v</sup> (September 1521), 48<sup>v</sup> (January 1522).

<sup>87</sup> A.S.F., *Tratte*, 906, f. 87<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>88</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 407.

<sup>89</sup> A.S.F., Mss. Torrigiani, III, ins. 21, F, ff. 4<sup>r-v</sup>: Benedetto Buondelmonti to Piero Ardinghelli, 27 March 1521, reveals that the threat of violence between the two kinsman had been apparent from the very beginning of the dispute.

Francesco Guicciardini had noted in March 1521 the 'ugly' affair of the assault, remarking that unless some action was taken against Benedetto, if Zanobi was a man of any substance, some 'disorder' (*disordine*) would result.<sup>90</sup>

The Cardinal had brought Benedetto back to the city because he was a trusted supporter and important agent of the Medici,<sup>91</sup> and his father was a leading member of the inner circles of the regime.<sup>92</sup> Following his involvement in the coup against Soderini, Benedetto had been particularly close to Lorenzo, being one of those citizens Lorenzo hired for his company when Captain-general,<sup>93</sup> then in 1517 an agent for Lorenzo during the wars over Urbino,<sup>94</sup> in March 1518 one of five citizens who accompanied Lorenzo to France on the occasion of his wedding,<sup>95</sup> and from then until Lorenzo's death in May 1519 his agent in Rome and one of his closest advisors.<sup>96</sup> Close as Zanobi was to the Cardinal, he was too young to be a member of the ruling circles of the regime. Benedetto's importance however, was such that in May 1522 the Cardinal sent him to France to repair the very rift with Francis I which made the conspiracy of Zanobi possible.<sup>97</sup> The plot thus reveals the extent to which the security of the Medici was threatened by their willingness to favour their most trusted supporters, even to the point of protecting them from the consequences of their transgressions of the law.

This was not the first occasion when such protection had provoked an attack on the Medici regime from within the ranks of its own supporters. Camillo Antinori, for example, was no long-standing opponent of the Medici, and his outburst against the regime in April 1517, when he was a prominent member of the government, seems to have been the result of his belief that the regime had allowed a grievous

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<sup>90</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, xvii, p. 157: Francesco to Luigi Guicciardini, 2 March 1521.

<sup>91</sup> Appendix A, xiii. B.N.F., N.A., 988, ff. 49<sup>r</sup>-50<sup>r</sup>: 'Seconda nota di cittadini confidenti più giovani per experimentarle et dare poi loro reputatione secondo rieschono', names Benedetto Buondelmonti.

<sup>92</sup> Appendix A, xiii. B.N.F., N.A., 988, ff. 57<sup>r</sup>-58<sup>v</sup>: "Nota di cittadini confidenti allo stato", names Filippo Buondelmonti. Lanfedino Lanfredini (d. 1518) is also named on this list.

<sup>93</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXXXII, f. 91<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>94</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, ff. 133<sup>v</sup>, 134<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 138<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>96</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXLIII and CXLV: Collections of letters from Buondelmonti to Lorenzo de' Medici and Goro Gheri from May 1518 to May 1519; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 132-4.

<sup>97</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 408; 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', pp. 246-7; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 154-6.

injury committed him against by partisans of the Medici to go unpunished. Antinori's father, Niccolò, was named on a list of supporters of the Medici drawn up in 1513 and had been an official of the *Monte* in 1515.<sup>98</sup> On account of his loans to the regime, Goro Gheri had supported Niccolò's request in March 1517 that Camillo be a member of the next Twelve Good Men,<sup>99</sup> and Camillo was duly appointed, only to be dismissed from office by the *Signoria* on 11 April as a result of his outburst.<sup>100</sup>

Antinori's attack was made in the midst of a threatening and abusive tirade against two members of the *Otto di Guardia*, including Cristofano Sernigi,<sup>101</sup> a partisan supporter of the Medici who had taken part in the forcing of the *parlamento* in 1512.<sup>102</sup> According to both Gheri and Luigi Guicciardini, Antinori was angry that a complaint lodged with the *Otto* on his behalf against three 'supporters (*amici*) of the Medici family', accusing them of breaking into his house at night and raping one of the girls in his household, had been found to be false.<sup>103</sup> The three had denied the charge and worked with the *Otto*, according to Guicciardini, to find the 'truth' behind its 'falseness'.<sup>104</sup>

When Antinori was condemned for his outburst he was also condemned for having made an 'insulting' and 'infamous libel' against 'noble persons' that was 'wholly against the truth', for which he was sentenced to pay over a thousand florins to various pious and charitable groups.<sup>105</sup> Yet Antinori evidently believed that partisans of the Medici in the *Otto* had protected three of their friends who had

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<sup>98</sup> See Appendix A, xii.

<sup>99</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I, 9, n. 44: Goro Gheri to Lorenzo de' Medici, 4 March 1517.

<sup>100</sup> A.S.F., Tratte, 61, f. 102<sup>v</sup>; A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, ii, ff. 140<sup>v</sup>, 152<sup>r</sup>: Goro Gheri to Ser Bernardo Fiamminghi da San Miniato, 8 and 12 April 1517; F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, ii, p. 86.

<sup>101</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, ii, f. 152<sup>r</sup>: Gheri to Ser Bernardo Fiamminghi da San Miniato, 12 April 1517.

<sup>102</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, f. 146<sup>r</sup>: 'Amici'; Ibid., f. 104<sup>r</sup>: 'Confidenti', both name Sernigi. Lanfredino Lanfredini (d. 1518) is on both lists. Sernigi is also named on lists in Ibid., f. 25<sup>r</sup>: 'Nota de' cittadini da dare loro utile, homini da bene et amici' and Ibid., f. 49<sup>r</sup>-50<sup>r</sup>: 'Seconda nota di cittadini confidenti più giovani per experimentarle et dare poi loro reputatione secondo rieschono'.

<sup>103</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, ii, ff. 137<sup>v</sup>, 150<sup>v</sup>, 155<sup>r</sup>, 160<sup>v</sup>: Letters of Gheri to Alfonsina de' Medici and Ser Bernardo Fiamminghi of 7, 8, 12 and 16 April 1517. Antinori was married in 1515, so it is unlikely that the girl was his daughter, B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 156 (Antinori), tav. vii; Ibid., 8, f. 27<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>104</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, ii, p. 86: Luigi to Francesco Guicciardini, 13 April 1517.

<sup>105</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 167, ff. 59<sup>r</sup>-60<sup>r</sup>; Ibid., 230 (Libro di Condanne), f. 201<sup>v</sup>; F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, ii, p. 86.

committed a grievous injury against him, and that is why his attack on the members the *Otto* had included the charge that 'justice was not being done',<sup>106</sup> and why he had attacked the regime in the midst of his tirade.

While the cases of Antinori and Buondelmonti demonstrated the dangers to the regime of protecting partisans from the consequences of their transgressions of the law, the plot of 1522 also demonstrated the dangers to the regime of failing to satisfy the expectations of their supporters, particularly those aroused by elevation of Cardinal Giovanni to the Papacy in 1513. Like the other conspirators, Battista della Palla was said by contemporaries to have been moved by some personal resentment with the Cardinal.<sup>107</sup> Nardi relates how Battista della Palla had been a 'familiar and affectionate servant' of Giuliano, from whom he had firm hope of being made a Cardinal. Deprived of that hope following Giuliano's premature death in 1516, della Palla had persevered in a 'most devoted service' of Pope Leo X.<sup>108</sup> At great personal expense della Palla had donated some sable linings to the Pope, who had promised to give him the first 'scrittoria' that fell vacant. He had still found no post when the Pope died, and the sables, which were being claimed by Leo's heirs, were only returned to him through the help of Cardinal Soderini.<sup>109</sup>

Della Palla had certainly been unsuccessfully courting the Medici for ecclesiastical position ever since 1512. Busini later recalled how della Palla had held the most sumptuous banquets for Giuliano on his return to Florence in 1512, that he was then living like a gentleman with many pages and servants, and that he had bet Giuliano Gondi that he would have earnings of one thousand *scudi* within three years.<sup>110</sup> Correspondence of the Medici family,<sup>111</sup> and hitherto ignored letters from della Palla to a secretary of Cardinal Giulio,<sup>112</sup> show that from 1514 to March 1521 della Palla was regularly making requests for some profitable benefice or

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<sup>106</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, ii, f. 137<sup>v</sup>: Gheri to Alfonsina de' Medici, 7 April 1517.

<sup>107</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 138.

<sup>108</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 79.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>110</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 94. See also Varchi, *Storia*, ii, p. 396.

<sup>111</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXLI, f. 10<sup>v</sup>: Lorenzo to Alfonsina de' Medici, 13 March 1514.

<sup>112</sup> There is no mention of this correspondence in the best study on della Palla to date, C. Elam, 'Art in the Service of Liberty. Battista della Palla, Art Agent for Francis I', *I Tatti Studies*, v (1993), pp. 33-111.



ecclesiastical office.<sup>113</sup> In this pursuit he could find himself writing to inform Giulio's secretary, as he did in 1518, of the ill health of the present holder of two benefices, one of which he estimated to be worth forty ducats.<sup>114</sup> By September 1520 his dissatisfaction with the little if any success which his requests had enjoyed led to a direct complaint to Giulio's secretary of 'having spent so much money, and exerted so much effort without having any prize'.<sup>115</sup>

Della Palla was not the only the supporter of the Medici discontented that the Medici's possession of the Papacy had not borne the 'fruits' he had hoped for. Indeed such dissatisfaction was widely felt, and discontent with the Medici was thus greater than it had been than before Cardinal Giovanni's elevation, as Alessandro de' Pazzi remarked only weeks before the plot was uncovered.<sup>116</sup> The plot of 1522, as we have seen, revealed the extent to which the security of the Medici in Florence relied on the powerful resources of the Papacy to protect it from plots and all but the most powerful armed assault. Yet della Palla's involvement in the plot also reveals just how serious a threat was posed to the security of the Medici by their possession of the Papacy, and their failure to satisfy the expectations it aroused in their supporters.

Other Florentines who shared della Palla's resentment were also moved to work and conspire against the regime. Lorenzo Salviati was in France in the autumn of 1521,<sup>117</sup> hatching plans over the next few months to kill the Cardinal and to command an assault on Florence with French backing. He told Niccolò Martelli that Pope Leo X had 'benefited all my relatives but had never wished to benefit me', and that he thus desired to show the Pope whether he was 'a man to be esteemed or not'.<sup>118</sup> Filippo Strozzi was also partly moved to plot against the Medici in 1526/7, according to contemporaries, by resentment that Clement had not fulfilled a promise

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<sup>113</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXVIII, nn. 5, 11, 75, 91: Battista della Palla to Borso Bertolotti da Coreggio, 28 May 1516, 19 January 1518, 26 August 1519, 2 March 1521; *Ibid.*, XCVIII, n. 128: Same to Same, 21 November 1520.

<sup>114</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXVIII, n. 25: Battista della Palla to Borso Bertolotti, 22 August 1518.

<sup>115</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXVIII, nn. 117, 118: Battista della Palla to Borso Bertolotti, 20 September 1520, and postscript.

<sup>116</sup> Pazzi, 'Discorso', p. 425.

<sup>117</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 389.

<sup>118</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', pp. 255-6.

to make his son a Cardinal,<sup>119</sup> and that the Pope and other members of the Medici family had defrauded his wife, Clarice de' Medici, of part of her inheritance.<sup>120</sup>

With regards to Buondelmonti and della Palla the plot of 1522 was the result of the Medici's failure to satisfy the honour and expectations of their supporters, but the involvement of the Soderini in the conspiracy was rather the result of the Medici's failure to crush their opponents. The lifting of the banishment of the Soderini in exchange for Cardinal Soderini's support for Cardinal Giovanni in the conclave of 1513 was opposed by Giuliano and met with vociferous protest from Medici supporters.<sup>121</sup> The Rucellai sent Corsi and da Diacceto to Rome to persuade the Pope of the 'scandal' that would follow.<sup>122</sup> Also part of the deal struck between the two Cardinals was a marriage alliance between the two families, and while Alfonsina vetoed a match with Lorenzo, one with the Pope's nephew, Luigi Ridolfi, proceeded in January 1517.<sup>123</sup> This too was met with protests from Medici supporters in Florence, including Goro Gheri,<sup>124</sup> who complained of this and recent concessions to the Soderini concerning some benefices, with the remark that he praised 'humanity, clemency and goodness, but not when it harms oneself, because then it is against charity'.<sup>125</sup>

Gheri believed that the Medici were mistakenly attempting to conciliate or quieten the Soderini with favour, but it may be that they were simply biding their time until the conditions of the deal of 1513 had been observed, for the treatment of the Soderini was certainly ruthless thereafter. In June 1517 Cardinal Soderini was arrested, examined and banished to Naples following what his biographer has argued was a false accusation of involvement in a fictitious plot against the life of the Pope.<sup>126</sup> In December the Soderini were forced to sell back at purchase price, without compensation for any improvements, Medici property bought after 1494, when the

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<sup>119</sup> Foscari, 'Relazione', p. 55; Carnesecchi, 'Assedio', p. 451; Segni, *Storie*, i, pp. 11-12.

<sup>120</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', p. xxxvii; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 128.

<sup>121</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 305.

<sup>122</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 91<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>123</sup> Lowe, *Francesco Soderini*, pp. 97-8.

<sup>124</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, i, ff. 222<sup>r-v</sup>: Gheri to Alfonsina de' Medici, 4 January 1517.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 215<sup>v</sup>-216<sup>r</sup>: Gheri to Baldassare Turini da Pescia, 1 January 1517.

<sup>126</sup> Lowe, *Francesco Soderini*, pp. 104-114.

Medici's possessions had been confiscated.<sup>127</sup> Thus that the Medici failed to crush the Soderini was not the result of any mistaken attempt to conciliate them, and the involvement of the Soderini in the plot of 1522 was rather the result of the inability of the Medici, despite their best efforts and with all the resources of the Papacy at their disposal, to break a family with a Cardinal.

In the end however, it was to the Medici's mistaken attempts to reconcile opponents to the regime that contemporaries were to attribute their overthrow in 1527, a fact largely ignored by modern historians.<sup>128</sup> In contrast to those who had explained Soderini's overthrow in terms of that same mistake however, the emphasis was placed on the disastrous affect the mistaken attempt to reconcile opponents had had on the loyalty of the Medici's supporters. Foscari for example, described a few months after the overthrow of the Medici how their supporters, those who had suffered for their cause, had become increasingly discontented, both because of the growing share of offices distributed to opponents of the Medici, and because an equal share of taxes was being imposed on friends and enemies alike. The Medici, their supporters had lamented, should be giving offices to their friends and taxes to their enemies, as Lorenzo had done. If the Medici had shown more favour to their supporters, Foscari argued, the majority of them would not have sided the city against the Medici in 1527, and consequently the regime would have stayed firm.<sup>129</sup>

Guicciardini also argued that in distributing office and honours widely, not showing any 'extraordinary favour' to their friends and treating everyone with 'equality', the Medici had pleased the *popolo* but been quite unable to eradicate the desire for the return of the Great Council.<sup>130</sup> Yet in attempting to do so, the Medici had failed to make a 'foundation of partisan supporters', who obtained much benefit from the regime and knew themselves 'lost' and unable to remain in Florence if the Medici were expelled, and thus their supporters had not been so satisfied with the

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<sup>127</sup> Tommasini, *Machiavelli*, ii, p. 1053; Lowe, *Francesco Soderini*, pp. 71, 101.

<sup>128</sup> The matter is referred to briefly in Anzilotti, *Crisi*, p. 103.

<sup>129</sup> Foscari, 'Relazione', p. 74.

<sup>130</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Scritti politici*, p. 288: 'Ricordi', C. 21.

regime that they had risked their lives to defend it, hoping rather to be able to survive the overthrow of the Medici as in 1494. Thus the Medici had been overthrown.<sup>131</sup>

The serious consequences for the Medici of the neglect of their supporters in the mistaken attempt to conciliate their enemies had indeed already been foreseen by the Mantuan ambassador, Giovanni Borromeo, in February 1525:<sup>132</sup>

in this city everyone is discontented, and the friends of the Medici family more so than their enemies, because they see the affairs of the regime in bad condition and that our lord Pope always seeks to favour and benefit his enemies thinking to make them friends, while they are left with kind words, and with these perhaps he believes that they can both feed and clothe themselves, and they are so desperate that if the need arises he will see how many of them will seize arms in the service of his family.

With the *Tumulto del Venerdì* the need did arise, and supporters of the Medici rushed to the Palace to show support for the revolt. Only when their overtures were rejected did they seek to support the Medici, for only then did they fear that they would not survive if the revolt succeeded.

Equally there were long-standing opponents involved in the *Tumulto* whom the Medici appear to have sought to conciliate with the rewards of office. At the head of the *Tumulto*, and amongst those who had conspired with Filippo Strozzi, was Niccolò Capponi, a member of the *Otto di Pratica* in 1524 despite having been on a list of *nemici* before 1517. Francesco Tosinghi was another listed *nemico* involved to have held office, in 1523, and Agostino Dini had been on a list of 'dubii' drawn up before 1518, which denoted those who were neither 'amici' nor 'ultimi', neither supporters of the regime, nor its most committed opponents.<sup>133</sup> Together with Dini, both Capponi and Tosinghi's father, Pierfrancesco, were also on this list, yet all three were to be made members of the Seventy in July 1522,<sup>134</sup> when Cardinal Giulio

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p. 287-8.

<sup>132</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1108, f. 559<sup>r</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 16 February 1525, 'in questa cipta ognuno e mal contento e più gli amici che li inimici della casa de' Medici perchè vedono le cose di questo stato in mal termine e che nostro Signore sempre cercha favorire et benefichare li sua inimici pensando farseli amici et loro restono con buone parole et crede forse di queste si possino et pascere et vestire e sono tanto desperato che se li venisse el bisogno vedrà quanti ne piglierano le arme per servitio della casa sua.'

<sup>133</sup> Appendix A, viii and x.

<sup>134</sup> A.S.F., Tratte, 419, f. 114<sup>r</sup>.

sought to broaden the regime in the aftermath of the plot,<sup>135</sup> and Dini was to sit in the *Otto di Pratica*.<sup>136</sup> This was despite the fact that Pierfrancesco Tosinghi had been a supporter of Francesco Valori and his efforts to execute the five leaders of the plot in 1497,<sup>137</sup> and that Dini had been a member of the *Otto di Guardia* that had executed them.<sup>138</sup> Pierfrancesco Portinari and Lorenzo Segni were two others involved in the revolt who had been on the list of *dubii*, and both had nevertheless gone on to hold office, albeit only in the Colleges.<sup>139</sup>

These men were not considered to be the most committed opponents of the Medici, but their involvement in the *Tumulto*, and particularly that of Capponi, does reveal the extent to which the revolt was the result of the failure of attempts by the Medici to conciliate their opponents to the regime. Yet Capponi and Tosinghi were the only two of the thirteen listed *nemici* or sons of *nemici* involved in the revolt who had held office since 1512. Those well-known opponents of the Medici who were at the forefront of the young nobles and others who distinguished themselves in the revolt had endured exclusion and the costs of exclusion ever since 1512. So too had those involved in the Giachinotti-Pitti plot of February 1527, who were all listed *nemici*. These men had suffered the full consequences of the fear and hatred of the regime towards them, including fiscal discrimination and persecution in the civil and criminal courts, such as a judgement against Battista Pitti by the consuls of the merchants' guild in 1525 which was overturned by the *Signoria* two weeks after the overthrow of the Medici.<sup>140</sup> Giovanni Rinuccini was also absolved in those days from an earlier condemnation of 1524,<sup>141</sup> when for false testimony he had been deprived for life of the right to hold office and exiled for one year to Bologna.<sup>142</sup> Both

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<sup>135</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, p. 122.

<sup>136</sup> Appendix A, x.

<sup>137</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 141, 145.

<sup>138</sup> A.S.F., *Tratte*, 905, f. 185<sup>v</sup>. Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 211, records that Dini was opposed to the execution.

<sup>139</sup> Appendix A, x and xi.

<sup>140</sup> A.S.F., *Sig. e Coll.*, *Delib.*, o.a., 129, f. 91<sup>r</sup> (30 May 1527).

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 83<sup>r</sup> (20 May 1527).

<sup>142</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 189, ff. 54<sup>v</sup>-6<sup>v</sup> (July 1524); Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 181<sup>v</sup>.

Lodovico de' Nobili and Francesco Bandini had been forced in 1518 to sell back at purchase price confiscated Medici estates bought before 1512.<sup>143</sup>

Some of the persecution they suffered was driven by the desire to avenge attacks committed during the popular regime by them or their families against the Medici and their supporters. Daniello Strozzi, for example, had been ordered by the *Otto* in 1514 to pay compensation for damage done to the property of the then Cardinal Giovanni during the overthrow of regime in November 1494.<sup>144</sup> Some persecution was the result of deliberate attempts to deprive them of any ability to pose a threat to the regime. Some had the support of the Medici, and some did not. The Medici themselves appear to have been divided on the best way to treat opponents. When Giuliano died in 1516 it was said that he had been displeased with the way that affairs were governed in Florence under Lorenzo, because Giuliano preferred to 'make himself loved rather than feared by men' and desired sooner to 'propitiate his opponents by benefiting them, than to oppress them with vendetta'.<sup>145</sup> According to Francesco Vettori, Lorenzo desired to be more severe to opponents, since he was the son of Piero, than did the Pope, Giuliano or Giulio.<sup>146</sup>

Divisions between the Medici and their supporters, and between the Medici themselves, prevented the development of any coherent, consistent and thorough policy of oppression.<sup>147</sup> It was Lorenzo who ordered the banishment of twenty-three of the most 'suspected' opponents to Bologna, Modena, or to their villas when the threat of a Spanish attack in August 1517 brought fears of a revolt,<sup>148</sup> but all were readmitted to the city by papal bull of Leo X two months later.<sup>149</sup> The imprisonment of seventeen opponents by the *Signoria* on the occasion of Leo's death in December 1521 was made in Giulio's absence, and he immediately released those detained on

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<sup>143</sup> Tommasini, *Machiavelli*, ii, p. 1053.

<sup>144</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 158, f. 73<sup>r</sup> (April 1514).

<sup>145</sup> N. Guicciardini, 'Discorso', pp. 355-6.

<sup>146</sup> Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. 80.

<sup>147</sup> Polizzotto, 'Medici', pp. 146-7.

<sup>148</sup> A.S.Mo., Canc. Duc., Firenze, 12, (unfoliated): Pierantonio Torello to the Duke, 22 August 1517; Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 136<sup>r</sup>; F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, ii, p. 191; N. Guicciardini, 'Discorso', pp. 360-1.

<sup>149</sup> T. Tosinchi, 'Vita', B.N.F., F.P., II, II, 325, f. 129<sup>r</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 347.

his return six days later,<sup>150</sup> criticizing, according to Cambi, the 'private passions' of those responsible.<sup>151</sup> Thus the Medici did seek to protect opponents from the excesses of their partisans, and a striking instance of that was Giuliano's concern in December 1513 that Tommaso Marchi was in trouble on account of the fact that his brother had been condemned for speaking ill of the Medici some months before. When Giuliano resigned his position in Florence to Lorenzo in August 1513, he had advised him to ensure that civil justice was not impeded by favours or money and that the *Otto* were not moved by malevolence to punish individuals more than they deserved.<sup>152</sup> He now instructed Ser Niccolo Michelozzi to have the proceedings against Marchi brought to an end:<sup>153</sup>

It seems that he is suffering unjustly for the error of others, which displeases me strongly, and especially that this condemnation has proceeded for our cause. Whoever has sinned suffers the penance, whoever is not at fault neither justice nor we ourselves desire should suffer punishment... You will understand what it is necessary to do in Tommaso's benefit, and in my name, where it is expedient, recommend his innocence, requesting the *Signoria* or the *Otto* not to allow themselves to do wrong ... because it does not seem to me just to persecute those who have not offended ...

Thus the Medici did protect opponents from some acts of what they considered to be of partisan excess, and Giovanni Rinuccini was one individual involved in the *Tumulto* whose public hostility to the Medici ten years earlier had been tolerated, as we have seen, much to Gheri's disapproval. Nevertheless Rinuccini held no office after 1512 and was amongst those banished in 1517 and detained in 1521, and it is clear that those well-known opponents involved in the Giachinotti-Pitti plot, and at the forefront of the young nobles and others who distinguished themselves in the *Tumulto* had endured the costs of exclusion and persecution rather

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<sup>150</sup> Tosinghi, 'Vita', f. 129<sup>r</sup>; Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 176<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>151</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 190; Pitti, 'Istoria', p. 121.

<sup>152</sup> 'Instructione al Magnifico Lorenzo', p. 302; Butters, *Governors*, p. 223.

<sup>153</sup> B.N.F., Ginori Conti, 29, 41 (unfoliated): Giuliano de' Medici to Ser Niccolò Michelozzi, 6 December 1513, 'pare che iniustamente patisce per lo error d' altri il che mi dispiace forte et maxime essendo tal condenatione proceduta per la cause res, chi ha peccato patisce la penitenza, chi non è in colpa nè la iustitia nè noi vogliamo patisca punishmente per tanto poichè non si trova costi el Magnifico Lorenzo. Intenderete voi quello bisogni fare in beneficio del predetto Tommaso et in mio nome dove fussi expediente rachommandate la innocentia sua pregando la Signoria o li Octo che non li lassino far torto e che la ragione debita li sua ad ministratione perchè non mi pare iusto perseguitare chi non ha offeso'.

than the rewards of conciliation. To that extent both the plot of February 1527 and the revolt in April were testament not to mistaken attempts by the Medici to conciliate their opponents, but rather to the ability of their opponents to survive ruthless persecution by supporters of the regime.

A good example of what they had endured since 1512 is provided by the experience of Tommaso Tosinghi, a well-known and listed opponent of the Medici,<sup>154</sup> whose full story has not been told before.<sup>155</sup> He was not one of those at the forefront of events in 1527, but like many who were, he was amongst those banished in 1517 and those detained in 1521.<sup>156</sup> Tosinghi's fate reveals not only the persecution suffered by opponents of the Medici, but also the mixture of both fear and hatred behind it, the extent to which it took place with and without Medici blessing, and to which the Medici did protect opponents from attacks they considered to be of needless excess.

In 1525, having recorded 'all the most notable things' that he had suffered since 1512, Tosinghi concluded that 'in effect, in every case I have been treated as an enemy of the regime'. He recorded that neither he nor his sons had ever been drawn for any office, and that amongst the 'very least things' he had suffered were 'most dishonest impositions, forced loans beyond any duty, dishonest taxes', which had forced him to rent out his house in Florence, and live 'very wretchedly' in his villa.<sup>157</sup>

In December 1515 Tosinghi and Francesco del Pugliese, another *nemico* of the regime, were amongst those citizens forced by the *Signoria* to give free lodging to Cardinals attending the Pope during his visit to the city.<sup>158</sup> In December 1516, in what Tosinghi considered to be 'the most wicked sentence that was ever given in our city',<sup>159</sup> he had been deprived of some property and fined three hundred ducats by the *Otto di Guardia* having been accused and found guilty with his son, Luigi, of

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<sup>154</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, f. 94<sup>v</sup>: 'Inimici'; Ibid., f. 103<sup>r</sup>: 'Nota di non amici'; Ibid., f. 164<sup>r</sup>: 'Ultimi'. On the date of these lists see Appendix A, Sources.

<sup>155</sup> Some brief news can be found in Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, pp. 256, 275-6, 320-1.

<sup>156</sup> Appendices B and C.

<sup>157</sup> Tosinghi, 'Vita', f. 129<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>158</sup> Masi, *Ricordanze*, p. 183; Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 121<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>159</sup> Tosinghi, 'Vita', f. 129<sup>r</sup>.



unlawfully and forcefully taking possession of property rightfully belonging to a ward of the commune.<sup>160</sup> In 1514 however, the *Ufficiali dei Pupilli* had heard the disputed claims over the property and despite a legal report in Tosinghi's favour had given a judgement, as Tosinghi recalled, 'to make a compromise of it', the terms of which were established by July 1516.<sup>161</sup> According to Tosinghi it then seemed to Jacopo Salviati, who 'had had this care from the regime' that he had not been able to ensure that Tosinghi's cause was 'ruined', and so when he was a member of the *Otto di Guardia* he had originated the accusation against Tosinghi. Tosinghi records that when he afterwards complained to Salviati about the case, Salviati said that he had not agreed to it and told Tosinghi to 'have patience', that 'a little venting of anger' (*sfochamento*) was necessary, that he believed that there had now been enough, and that Tosinghi's affairs would not be so treated in the future.<sup>162</sup>

Goro Gheri emerges from his own correspondence as the main force within the regime behind the case, of which the Medici were kept fully informed, although Gheri was always afraid that they or Jacopo Salviati would intervene to protect Tosinghi, and indeed they may have prevented Gheri from pursuing another attack.<sup>163</sup> Shortly before the notification was accepted by the *Otto*,<sup>164</sup> Gheri informed Baldassare Turini, whose advice he had already sought on the matter, that Tosinghi's hold on the property 'does not please me, but I would truly like to find honest causes, or at least ones coloured that way, to want to lift it from him', and that having searched for a way to do so 'justifiably, not for his count, but for that of the *universale*', he had had an action against Tosinghi put before the *Otto*.<sup>165</sup>

The reason for which Gheri was so concerned with despoiling Tosinghi of the property was no doubt his belief, expressed throughout his correspondence at this time, that it was necessary 'to weaken enemies by that way that is more honest and

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<sup>160</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 166, ff. 80<sup>r</sup>, 82<sup>r</sup> (31 December 1516).

<sup>161</sup> Tosinghi, 'Vita', ff. 128<sup>v</sup>-9<sup>r</sup>; A.S.F., O.G., 166, ff. 80<sup>r</sup>-2<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>162</sup> Tosinghi, 'Vita', f. 129<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>163</sup> Polizzotto, *Elect Nation*, p. 276.

<sup>164</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 166, f. 68<sup>r</sup> (23 December 1516).

<sup>165</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, i, ff. 187<sup>r-v</sup>: Gheri to Baldassare Turini da Pescia, 15 December 1516.

more reasonable',<sup>166</sup> to 'touch treacherous enemies with justice, as every day could happen', for then 'those who are malcontent only for the ambition that they would like the popular government' need not be feared, since 'if you remove their leaders and batter these traitors', the others in time would accommodate themselves to the regime.<sup>167</sup>

In April 1525 the *Signoria* banished Tosinghi and three others from the city for two years and deprived them for life of the ability to hold office in their guild,<sup>168</sup> for having established a new scrutiny for the *provveditore* of the *Arte de' Mercatanti* without the consent of the *Signoria*.<sup>169</sup> Tosinghi recorded his sentence with dismay, having believed that 'my affairs had been persecuted and trampled on and that I had been left in peace'.<sup>170</sup> Tosinghi believed that the affair was not in any way considered a threat to the regime, since the individual elected as *provveditore*, his nephew, Lorenzo, was not removed from office. Tosinghi thus accounted for his punishment as the result of a desire 'to batter me', without which 'none of the others would have been so dealt with'.<sup>171</sup> Certainly the sentence of Tosinghi and the others was overturned by the *Signoria* shortly after the overthrow of the Medici in 1527.<sup>172</sup> Little wonder that if following the condemnation Tosinghi could give thanks that 'having come into so much disgrace of the regime worse has not been done to me', he had also to lament that 'outside of taking my life, they could do little worse to me'.<sup>173</sup>

Tosinghi blamed Piero di Niccolò Ridolfi and Piero di Lionardo Tornabuoni for the harshness with which he was treated in the case of 1525.<sup>174</sup> They were both relatives of the conspirators executed in 1497, and Tosinghi had been one of the *Otto di Guardia* at the time.<sup>175</sup> Parenti and others inform us that he was rightly held to

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid., ff. 230<sup>r-v</sup>, 232<sup>r-v</sup>: Gheri to Baldassare Turini da Pescia, 14 January 1517.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., f. 217<sup>r</sup>: Gheri to Baldassare Turini da Pescia, 1 January 1517.

<sup>168</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 127, f. 54<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>169</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 184<sup>r</sup>; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 268-9.

<sup>170</sup> Tosinghi, 'Vita', f. 129<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., ff. 129<sup>v</sup>, 130<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>172</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 129, f. 95<sup>v</sup> (6 June 1527).

<sup>173</sup> Tosinghi, 'Vita', f. 129<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., f. 130<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>175</sup> A.S.F., Tratte, 905, f. 185<sup>v</sup>.

have worked hard for the execution 'at the instance of the Valori' and was a close supporter of Francesco Valori thereafter.<sup>176</sup> Indeed Tosinghi believed his role in 1497 to have been 'the cause of my ruin' and all that he had suffered since 1512. Tosinghi did note however, that his companions in office had not been treated in the same way, some even finding a place in the regime, and he explained that this was because he, unlike them, had not 'wanted to seek forgiveness and accommodate myself to today's government', because 'this regime seeming to me to be totally against my taste, I have never been able to reconcile myself with it if it harmed me as much as the power of the world'.<sup>177</sup>

Tosinghi's fate had been shared by those well-known opponents involved in the events of 1527, who had not been crushed by the regime despite the exclusion and persecution they had endured. They sought vengeance for all that they had suffered, but that was not the reason for their opposition to the Medici, nor the reason for which they attacked the regime. They had suffered because they were opponents, and neither the Giachinotti-Pitti plot nor the *Tumulto* were in any way directly provoked by the exclusion and persecution endured by those involved.

Some verbal offences against the regime however, were a direct response to injuries which those involved believed they had suffered on account of their well-known opposition to the regime. Andrea Rinuccini was a listed *nemico* of the Medici,<sup>178</sup> and his and Francesco Carcherelli's attack in 1518 was made in the midst of an angry and abusive tirade towards the Commissioner in Prato, Domenico Canigiani, a supporter of the Medici.<sup>179</sup> The pair were aggrieved, according to Gheri's account, that Canigiani had confiscated arms from one of them, and Rinuccini clearly believed that he had been grievously treated by a partisan of the Medici because he was one of their opponents, and thus it was that his attack was directed not only against Canigiani, but his 'friends' and the regime.<sup>180</sup> The same

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<sup>176</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', ed. Schnitzer, p. 295; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 141, 145; Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 129.

<sup>177</sup> Tosinghi, 'Vita', f. 129<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>178</sup> Appendix A, xii.

<sup>179</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., XCIX, n. 45, f. 164<sup>r</sup>: A list of 'amici' of the regime drawn up by early 1513, which names Canigiani.

<sup>180</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, iv, f. 270<sup>v</sup>: Gheri to Lorenzo de' Medici, 6 August 1518.

grievance may have provoked Niccolò Paganelli's outburst in 1515. For this was directed towards a tax official who was a close supporter of the Medici,<sup>181</sup> and Paganelli was a listed opponent of the regime.<sup>182</sup>

However, amongst those condemned for verbal offences were also well-known opponents of the regime whom the Medici had sought to conciliate with rewards. Thirteen of the forty individuals condemned by the Medici were listed *nemici* before they were condemned, one of whom, Alessandro Manetti, had been amongst those banished in 1517. While most had held no office after 1512, two had, both before they were condemned.<sup>183</sup> Jacopo Altoviti had requested Lorenzo in 1514 for a position in the Colleges, reminding him of the affection that the Altoviti had shown the Medici in the past,<sup>184</sup> and his request was granted in 1517, despite being on a list of opponents drawn up at that time.<sup>185</sup> Piero Orlandini had been on lists of *nemici* since before the plot of 1513, concerning which he had been arrested and examined, but had nevertheless been granted positions in the Colleges in January 1518 and the *Otto di Guardia* in 1520.<sup>186</sup> Goro Gheri had recommended Orlandini to Lorenzo for the position in 1518.<sup>187</sup> Cardinal Giulio believed that Orlandini could be won over, Gheri reported, and he reminded Lorenzo that when men 'are not supporters ordinarily, it is necessary to make them so artificially', and 'if they cannot be won over completely, they can at least be made the objects of the jealousy of the other discontented'.<sup>188</sup>

Thus the Medici did seek to conciliate opponents with honour and rewards, and that may have resulted, as contemporaries argued, in the overthrow of the regime in 1527 because it meant that the Medici failed to bind their supporters closely enough to them that they made any effort to defend the regime. Yet with only a very

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<sup>181</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, ff. 66<sup>r-v</sup>: 'Nota de amici et huomini da bene da servire e honorarli', names Giovanni di Paolo Machiavelli, the official concerned, according to Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 118<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>182</sup> Appendix A, xi.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXVI, n. 595: Jacopo Altoviti to Lorenzo de' Medici, 16 December 1514.

<sup>185</sup> Appendix A, xi.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> A.S.F., Copialettere di Goro Gheri, iv, ff. 39<sup>r</sup>, 47<sup>r</sup>, 71<sup>v</sup>: Gheri to Lorenzo de' Medici, 27 December 1517, 1 and 16 January 1518.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., f. 11<sup>v</sup>: Gheri to Lorenzo, 1 December 1517.

few exceptions, all those well-known and listed opponents condemned for verbal offences, involved in plots and at the forefront of the *Tumulto* had endured exclusion and persecution since 1512. To that extent plots and other violent attacks against the Medici regime were the result of the failure of the Medici to crush their opponents despite attempts to do so.

The exclusion and persecution suffered by those involved in plots and the *Tumulto* helps to explain the hatred and desire for vengeance that they and other opponents of the Medici were to display during the last republic. This was to have as serious consequences for the popular regime, Guicciardini predicted in 1528 and again in 1530, as the Medici's neglect of their supporters had done. While the Medici had been overthrown for having governed according to the customs of 'liberty', the popular government would be overthrown, Guicciardini warned, for governing according to the customs of a 'narrow regime' (*stato stretto*), 'especially in excluding one part of the city', because 'liberty cannot be maintained without the universal satisfaction'.<sup>189</sup> The popular regime could conserve itself, Guicciardini wrote, only 'with infinite friends', achieved by assuring the 'security of all' through proceeding 'in every effect with justice and equality', and not as it was attempting to do, 'with few partisans whom it is incapable of ruling', because to maintain itself it needed to 'escape the discords of the citizens' which 'open the way to the overthrow of governments'.<sup>190</sup>

Guicciardini himself was to prove his warnings right, for with Francesco Vettori he was one of those leading citizens driven into the arms of the Pope at the beginning of the siege by their fear of persecution at the hands of the popular government. In the early summer of 1530 Guicciardini explained why in a passage in his *Considerations on the 'Discourses' of Machiavelli* which has been ignored by his biographers:<sup>191</sup>

following the overthrow of the regime of 1527, some good and well-qualified citizens have been persecuted and trampled on, and finally with the arrival of the Prince of

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<sup>189</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Scritti politici*, pp. 279, 287: 'Ricordi', B. 180, C. 21.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 288.

<sup>191</sup> F. Guicciardini, 'Considerazioni', I, x, *Scritti politici*, pp. 19-20.

Orange it has been necessary for them either to disobey the commandments made by the *Otto* to stay in Florence under pain of being declared an outlaw, or to remain, with the danger of being killed, and at least with the certainty of being detained as men under suspicion. Necessity has driven them either to desire the overthrow of a regime that under the name of liberty is tyrannical and destructive of the country, or silently to allow themselves with the greatest injustice to be deprived of their country and their possessions.

As that passage makes plain, Guicciardini and others who fled for fear of persecution at the beginning of the siege would still not have joined the Pope if they had been allowed to leave the city without being declared outlaws and having their goods confiscated. Thus the ruthlessness with which those who disobeyed the ban to remain in the city were punished was a fatal error, as contemporaries recognized, forcing them not only to join the Pope, but to ensure that he did not come to terms.<sup>192</sup> Both Guicciardini and Vettori were to be amongst the Pope's closest advisors,<sup>193</sup> and with other Florentine exiles persuaded the Pope in the summer of 1530 against abandoning the campaign, telling him that 'otherwise they are destroyed for having done him service'.<sup>194</sup>

In 1527, unlike in 1494 and 1512, those who sought the ruthless persecution of leading members and supporters of the past regime were able to have their way, and since 1527 leading members of the Medici regime, particularly former servants of the Pope, as Guicciardini was, had suffered the full force of that persecution. That story is now well-known.<sup>195</sup> What has been little emphasized however, is the extent to which that persecution was driven not only by hatred and a desire for revenge, but also by fear and suspicion. Indeed it is a vast simplification to view the persecution of leading members of the Medici regime during the last republic, as is often done, as driven solely or even mainly by the desire for revenge.<sup>196</sup> For they were persecuted not only on account of what they had done in the past, but out of fear and suspicion of what they would do in the future. They were assumed, as Guicciardini was, to be

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<sup>192</sup> Ughi, 'Cronica', p. 156; Busini, *Lettere*, p. 146.

<sup>193</sup> Rossi, *Guicciardini*, i, p. 164, n. 2; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 221-4.

<sup>194</sup> Roth, *Last Republic*, p. 242; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 224-5.

<sup>195</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 221-229, 230-240, 249-251; Roth, *Last Republic*, pp. 64-5, 98-100; Rossi, *Guicciardini*, i, pp. 90-138; R. Ridolfi, *The Life of Francesco Guicciardini*, trans. C. Grayson (London, 1967), pp. 179-200; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 203-9;

<sup>196</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 220-1.

of 'tyrannical soul' and opposed to the popular regime, and much of what they suffered, as Guicciardini knew, was on account of 'suspicion' as well as 'hatred'.<sup>197</sup> And once the imperial armies approached in the autumn of 1529, the last republic was to end as an exercise in fear.

There were attacks motivated mainly by the desire for vengeance, such as the appointment of Syndics in June 1527 to investigate errors and frauds in the administration of public funds committed during the Medici regime.<sup>198</sup> Benedetto Buondelmonti was one of those found to be in debt to the Commune, and it was in the midst of a confrontation with servants of the Syndics when they attempted to collect the debt in October 1527 that Buondelmonti had threatened to rouse the *popolo*, the outburst for which he was condemned.<sup>199</sup> During his outburst Buondelmonti had blamed his treatment on the 'traitor' Pieradovardo Giachinotti, one of the Syndics, whom he said had tried to have him executed several times without success.<sup>200</sup> This was a reference perhaps to a variety of capital charges for which Buondelmonti was also to be tried following his outburst, and which were orchestrated, according to Buondelmonti's son, by Battista Pitti, another of the Syndics.<sup>201</sup> Buondelmonti then, one of the leading members of the Medici regime, was being pursued by two of the Medici regime's most implacable opponents, who had been imprisoned for conspiring against it, and who following its overthrow sought revenge for all that they had endured.

Yet even Buondelmonti's case illustrates the fear and suspicion in which leading members of the Medici regime were held and which lay behind the ruthlessness with which they were treated. One of the charges on which Buondelmonti was examined was that he had written to the Pope 'in prejudice of the popular regime'.<sup>202</sup> Buondelmonti claimed that he had written to the Pope 'in

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<sup>197</sup> F. Guicciardini, 'Consolatoria', *Scritti autobiografici*, pp. 166-8, 171, 173-4, 179, 188; Idem, *Opere inedite*, x, pp. 133-6. See also Idem, 'Oratoria accusatoria', *Scritti autobiografici*, pp. 197-233.

<sup>198</sup> Carnesecchi, 'Assedio', p. 457; Varchi, *Storia*, i, pp. 181-2, 208.

<sup>199</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 14; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 208; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 167.

<sup>200</sup> A.S.F., Balie, 46, f. 234<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>201</sup> B.N.F., F.P., II III 433, f. 82<sup>r</sup>: 'Ragguaglio del caso di Benedetto Buondelmonti per Messer Filippo suo figliuolo'; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 208.

<sup>202</sup> B.N.F., F.P., II III 433, ff. 82<sup>v</sup>-3<sup>r</sup>; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 209.

criticism of His Holiness and augmentation of the city', but the *Quarantia* wanted him re-examined believing that there must have been more to the correspondence, 'because one does not expect Benedetto to criticize the Pope, and I do not know how this popular regime is acceptable to him'.<sup>203</sup>

As the imperial forces approached in 1529, it was above all fear and 'suspicion', as Guicciardini recorded, that lay behind the threats against him and other members of the Medici regime.<sup>204</sup> A notification of March 1528 warning the *Otto* to be vigilant since the *uomini da bene* were all 'friends of the Pope and discontented with the way of government', bluntly expresses the fears of supporters of the popular regime.<sup>205</sup>

it would not be surprising to find some proof of that in this city from some malicious citizen, given their avarice and ambition, and since, having had in the past the means to be able to satisfy their wild appetites, they now submit themselves reluctantly to the laws, which they are accustomed to command. The Pope is able to give and promise much, and undoubtedly has the firm intention of again oppressing the city, if not with force then with deceit, according to the custom of perfidious tyrants, and thus it is necessary to be suspicious and to have the eyes open.

Another warned that with regards to the 'grandi' the *Otto* should 'consider every little moment as a great matter', since 'they cannot be under the yoke of the laws that are usually held in contempt and trampled on by them'.<sup>206</sup> Such blanket fear and suspicion of all those who had served the Medici regime however, was in many

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<sup>203</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 129, ff. 285<sup>v</sup>-6<sup>r</sup> (2 December 1527).

<sup>204</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, xvii, p. 268: Francesco to Luigi and Jacopo Guicciardini, 20 September 1529; Rossi, *Guicciardini*, i, pp. 288-9: Francesco Guicciardini and Alessandro de' Pazzi to Giovanbattista Sanga, 30 September 1529; F. Guicciardini, *Opere inedite*, x, pp. 136-7: Francesco Guicciardini to Otto di Guardia, 12 December 1529.

<sup>205</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 201 (Libro di Notificazioni), ff. 108<sup>v</sup>-9<sup>r</sup>: 'li huomini da bene si sono tucti absentati dallo stato per essere amici al Papa et mal contenti del modo del ghoverno ... se trovassi qualche riscontro in questa cipta di qualche doloroso cittadino non sarebbe da maravigliarsi atteso la loro avaritia et ambitione che per havere hauto il modo di poter satiare e disordinati appetiti loro mal volentieri si sottomectano alle leggi alle quale sono advezzi comandare. Potendo il Papa adunque dare et promectere molto et havendo fermo proposito di opprimere di nuova la cipta indebitamente se non con le forze con li inganni secondo il costume di perfidi tyranni bisogna temere et havere gli occhi aperti'.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 91<sup>r</sup>: 'de grandi stimate ogni piccol momento un gran cosa perchè non possono stare sotto el gioglio delle leggi consueto dalloro essere villiprese e calpreste'.



cases unwarranted. Buondelmonti was a good example. He was the object of popular 'suspicion' despite the fact, as Busini recalled, that he had been involved in the intrigues of his cousin, Zanobi, and Filippo Strozzi against the Medici in the winter of 1526,<sup>207</sup> and was one of those who loved liberty, according to Busini, on account of 'offences received'.<sup>208</sup> Guicciardini wrote in the *Considerations* that the harsh persecution 'without distinction' of those who had in the past supported the Medici, 'has made many desire their return, who otherwise would have abhorred it no less than anyone else'.<sup>209</sup>

Thus the persecution of former leading members and supporters of the Medici regime proved a fatal error on two counts. For it not only drove them into the arms of the Pope out of necessity, it did so when in many cases they would not otherwise have even desired the Medici's return. Oppression had created the very beast it had been intended to slay. Persecuted because they were believed to be of 'tyrannical soul', Guicciardini and other leading citizens had become so. For they were driven to conclude, as Vettori did in 1528, that those such as the plotters of 1522 who had thought to remove control of the regime from the Medici and 'restore a civil and good regime in Florence', were 'more desirous of liberty than prudent'. For 'the contrary would have happened to them' and they would have succeeded only in restoring a regime that was 'licentious and tyrannical to all'.<sup>210</sup> Liberty, a civil republican regime, was no longer possible. Thus, as has long been recognized, the ruthless treatment of leading citizens during the last republic finally paved the way for the end of republican government in Florence and the establishment of a Medici duchy.<sup>211</sup>

The ruthlessness with which the popular government of the last republic treated those believed to be opponents of the regime was driven in large measure by the desire to avoid the mistakes that led to Soderini's overthrow in 1512. Soderini had failed to crush his opponents, even when they were suspected or found to have

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<sup>207</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 12; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 98.

<sup>208</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, pp. 150-1.

<sup>209</sup> F. Guicciardini, 'Considerazioni', I, xvi, *Scritti politici*, p. 27.

<sup>210</sup> Vettori, 'Sommario', p. 342.

<sup>211</sup> Anzilotti, *Crisi*, pp. 77-81; Stephens, *Fall*, pp. 253-5. See also Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 242-5.

committed acts against him, and that is why he was overthrown. He had been unable as much as unwilling to kill the sons of Brutus, but that he failed to do so was at least in part due to the belief that he would be able to overcome their enmity with patience and rewards.

However, the *parlamento* that followed Soderini's overthrow, just as events during the siege, was the result of the fear of persecution felt by those involved, and demonstrated the serious threat posed to the regime by those threatened with persecution. In both 1512 and during the siege popular government had proved incapable of assuring the security of one part of its citizens, who were forced by necessity to seek its overthrow. Thus if Soderini's overthrow demonstrated the need for popular government to crush its opponents and kill the sons of Brutus, as Machiavelli argued, there were quite different lessons to be drawn from the events the last republic. Guicciardini pointed this out when he came in 1530 to consider Machiavelli's argument concerning the sons of Brutus. He noted how the indiscriminate persecution of members of the Medici regime had driven many to desire their return who otherwise would not have done so, and concluded that newly acquired liberty could only be maintained if it assured the security of those who had supported the past tyranny and crushed them only if they proved hostile to the new regime.<sup>212</sup>

Plots against the Medici in 1522 and 1526/7 were the direct result of their failure to satisfy the honour and expectations of their supporters, particularly those arising from the Medici's possession of the Papacy. Thus plots reveal the extent to which the elevation of the Medici to the Papacy, far from bolstering their position in Florence, actually threatened the security of the regime. Yet to the extent that most plots whether against the Medici or the popular government were the work of well-known opponents of the regime, suspected of waiting for the opportunity to work for its overthrow, most plots were the result of the failure of the regime to crush its opponents.

The Medici did seek to conciliate opponents with benefits and rewards, a fatal error according to contemporaries, which led to their overthrow particularly because

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<sup>212</sup> F. Guicciardini, 'Considerazioni', I, xvi, *Scritti politici*, p. 27.

it resulted in the neglect of their supporters, who were thus neither inclined nor forced to defend the regime. Buondelmonti's leadership of the plot of 1522 however, demonstrates the extent to which the security of the Medici was also threatened by their willingness to favour their most trusted supporters, even to the point of protecting them from the consequences of their transgressions of the law. Moreover, with only a very few exceptions, most notably Niccolò Capponi, those well-known opponents involved in plots against the Medici, and at the forefront of the *Tumulto del Venerdì*, had endured exclusion and persecution and the full force of the fear and hatred of the regime towards them. To that extent most plots against the Medici were the result of the failure of the regime to crush its opponents despite attempts to do so.

## Nobility and Youth

Plots in early sixteenth-century Florence have been viewed as part of a development amongst young men (*giovani*) of a political and social mentality of their own, a process which was to culminate in the central role of *giovani* in the events of 1527 and the last republic.<sup>1</sup> Alternatively, the conspiracies of 1513 and 1522, for example, have been seen as part of a tradition by which plots were generally the work of 'playboys', of young and wealthy men, who neither needed nor desired work.<sup>2</sup> The noble youths who were at the forefront of the *Tumulto del Venerdì*, it has recently been pointed out, had been at the centre of each violent overthrow of the regime in Florence, and various social and political factors have been advanced to explain this. In a society where most men married after the age of thirty, and eligibility to office began at the age of thirty, the central role in plots and political violence of noble youths, those between the ages of eighteen and thirty, is thus explained as the work of those with wealth, but without family responsibility, occupation, or political privileges.<sup>3</sup>

David Herlihy put forward a similar argument some time ago, to explain the proclivity to political violence he found characteristic of the Tuscan cities. Rich young men, he argued, were at the forefront of plots and factional conflicts, such as those in Florence and Pistoia in the early fourteenth century, because the late age of marriage amongst the wealthiest households in Tuscan cities meant that rich men under thirty were free from family responsibility, lacked any legitimate sexual outlets, and were often without any strong paternal presence, since fathers were often dead before their sons reached adulthood. Political violence was thus characteristic of

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<sup>1</sup> Trexler, *Public Life*, pp. 512-547.

<sup>2</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197.

Tuscan cities because of the preponderance of rich young unmarried men within them.<sup>4</sup>

This argument serves to remind us that the role of *giovani* in the plot of 1522 or the *Tumulto*, for example, was no new phenomenon in Florentine political conflict. Yet plots, according to this view, are presented as acts of youthful recklessness, to be explained by the absence in those involved of the moderating and restraining influences of work, family responsibility and political participation. It detracts from and even ignores the significance of the reasons for which conspirators risked their lives and property in attempting to overthrow the government, and it can and should be challenged. For it was the reasons for which men conspired against the regime, not their youth, that made the risks involved seem worth taking. If there ever was a moment in Florentine history when violent political conflict was the work of rich, young, unmarried men under thirty, that was simply not the case in the early sixteenth century. That there were plots against the regime in Florence in the early sixteenth century cannot in any way be explained by the political and social factors of the late age of marriage and fatherhood amongst the wealthiest sections of society and the exclusion of those under thirty from participation in political affairs, nor can the Florentine proclivity to violent political conflict be in any way attached to them.

There is no warrant for the notion that plots were mainly the work of the young. Many plots were mainly, even wholly the work of those in their forties and fifties, and such plots were just as common as those by younger men. Many plots, but certainly not most of them, were the work of those who were young by contemporary standards, but it was simply not the case that young men were a particular danger to the regime because they lacked family responsibility, occupation or political rights. Most of those conspirators who were young men were not in their twenties, but in their thirties. They were eligible to political office, and indeed many had held it. They were usually married, often had children, and were at the beginning of their commercial or other careers, and that indeed was also the case with many of those

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<sup>4</sup> D. Herlihy, 'Some Psychological and Social Roots of Violence in the Tuscan Cities', *Violence and Civil Disorder in Italian Cities, 1200-1500*, ed. L. Martines (Berkeley and London, 1972), pp. 141-152; D. Herlihy and C. Klapisich Zuber, *Tuscans and their Families* (Newhaven and London, 1985), pp. 196, 215, 220, 222-3.

few young conspirators who were only in their twenties. Their family responsibilities, occupations and commercial interests not only contradict the idea that young conspirators were 'playboys', but even on occasion help to explain why they were involved in conspiracy at all.

Some plots were the work of young and wealthy men, but the key fact about their wealth was not that it made them 'playboys', but that wealth was an essential resource for conspirators to possess, enabling them to gather the other disaffected around them, and to fund the military expeditions deemed essential for success. The most important fact about those conspirators who were young nobles, was not their youth but their nobility. For it was nobility, not youth, that all conspirators had in common, and it was their nobility, not their age, that most distinguished conspirators from others discontented with the regime.

Most conspirators, as we have seen, were from noble families and in almost all cases they or their fathers had held important political office. In many cases they or their fathers had been members of the inner circles of the regime, having held positions in the *Dieci di Balìa*, the *Otto di Pratica*, the *Accoppiatori* and the Council of Seventy, or had been called to speak in *pratiche* on their own behalf. Plots were all generally the work of the same group: those from noble families of some political prominence, often the leading families in the city. The reason is simple. It was these families who possessed the qualities and resources necessary to lead plots, and these families who were able to provide those financial and military resources which the leaders of conspiracies considered essential for success. One key to understanding the sociology of plots lies in explaining why those involved were able and asked to take part, and thus in understanding the resources in their possession that qualified them to lead and to participate in conspiracies. The participation of individuals in plots was largely dictated by the strategy of the plots themselves, by the need not only for trustworthy accomplices, but for those with the resources deemed necessary for success. Those resources might range from an individual's military skill to his financial wealth to his social and political clout and ability to command respect and support within the political community as well as outside it. Whatever those

resources may have been however, it is clear that part of the key to understanding an individual's participation in conspiracy lay in his possession of them.

It is in this way that the central role of young nobles in the violent assaults on the Palace in August and September 1512 and in 1527 is best explained, and not by reference to the lack of family responsibility, occupation or political privileges of those involved. Even if the young nobles involved in the *Tumulto* were mostly men in their twenties, that was not the case on either occasion in 1512, and while the leaders of the revolt of 1527 may have been unmarried and unoccupied youths, most of their young followers were men with family responsibility. The most important fact about their nobility and their youth was that it afforded them arms and the ability to use them. Young nobles, in their twenties or thirties, whether married, with children, and at the beginning of their political and commercial careers or not, were possessed of a military capacity. Young nobles were a military resource and that is why they had a central role in the violent overthrow of regimes.

Some contemporaries certainly believed that the young were far more dangerous to the regime than their elders. Luigi Guicciardini warned the Medici after 1530 that of the 'sospetti' in the city he feared those 'more young, and more courageous and more pertinacious than the others' because he held 'much less account of the old, being more cold towards undertakings, nor so venomous'.<sup>5</sup> In the same vein Lodovico Alamanni had written in 1516 that the 'old' were 'wise', and 'the wise are not to be feared because they never make political change (*novità*)'.<sup>6</sup> However, Niccolò Martelli advised Cardinal Giulio in 1524 that the old (*vecchi*), by which he referred to those with children, were as equally dangerous to the Medici as the young (*giovani*), although for different reasons.<sup>7</sup> In the light of the plots that took place, Martelli's was sound advice.

For plots were almost never, as they have been assumed to be, the work of rich young unmarried men in their twenties. Thanks to the archives of the *Tratte*, which record the date of birth of those citizens eligible for political office, it is

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<sup>5</sup> L. Guicciardini, 'Discorso al Duca Alessandro', ed. G. Capponi, *A.S.I.*, Ser. 1, i (1842), p. 460.

<sup>6</sup> L. Alamanni, 'Discorso', ed. Albertini, *Staatsbewusstsein*, p. 370.

<sup>7</sup> Martelli, 'Discorso', ed. Guasti, 'Documenti', pp. 217-222.

possible to present, for the first time, an almost complete account of the ages of those involved in conspiracies against the regime. With only one exception, as Table One below shows, most members of all plots were over the age of thirty. The plot of 1510, whose sole protagonist, the 'young noble' Prinzivalle della Stufa, was aged twenty-six,<sup>8</sup> was the only conspiracy in the early sixteenth century whose members could be said to have been even mainly under the age of thirty.

Table One

Ages of Conspirators

	17 - 29 yrs	30 - 39 yrs	40 - 49 yrs	Over 50 yrs	Age Unknown	Total
1497	2	8	9	3	8	30
1510	1	0	0	0	0	1
Aug. 1512	5	10	1	0	0	16
Sept. 1512	7	16	3	3	4	33
1513	0	2	3	0	0	5
1522	6	5	1	3	1	16
1526/7	0	1	1	3	0	5
Feb. 1527	0	0	4	2	0	6
Total	22	42	22	14	12	112

Sources: See Appendix A, i-viii.

Far from being the work of young men, four of the eight plots in the period were the work of men mainly aged over forty, often over fifty. All those involved in the Giachinotti-Pitti plot were aged over forty, Pescioni was fifty-seven, and Carducci, one of the three exiles involved, was seventy-one.<sup>9</sup> All four of those who conspired with the thirty-eight year old Filippo Strozzi in 1526/7 were over forty, and Capponi, Vettori and Matteo Strozzi were each in their fifties.<sup>10</sup> Three out of the five men involved in the plot of 1513 were in their forties, including one of its leaders,

<sup>8</sup> Appendix A, ii; Strozzi, 'Vita', p. xxvi.

<sup>9</sup> Appendix A, vii.

<sup>10</sup> Appendix A, viii.



Agostino Capponi, aged forty-two.<sup>11</sup> The majority of the conspirators of 1497 were aged over forty, including three of its five leaders: Giovanni Cambi, aged forty-three; Niccolò Ridolfi, aged fifty-two; and the 'very old' Bernardo del Nero, aged seventy-one.<sup>12</sup> Thus the security of the regime in Florence was threatened as much and as often by men in their forties and fifties, as it was by their younger counter parts.

Half of the plots of the period were mainly the work of those aged under forty, most of whom were in their thirties. These were, by contemporary standards, young men (*giovani*) and it is to those under the age of forty that Florentines referred when they wrote of *giovani* involved in plots and other attacks against the regime. Youth, by contemporary standards, was as relative as other terms of social description, but it was also a precise term for a distinct political group. The young, *giovani* or *iuvenes*, referred to in laws and provisions were those between the ages of twenty-four and forty, between the age at which one became eligible to attend some councils, and the age at which one was eligible to hold positions within the inner circles of the regime.<sup>13</sup> The late teens and early twenties was in political terms the age of adolescence, and contemporaries often referred to young men in this age group as *garzoni*.<sup>14</sup>

Those plots that were described as the work of *giovani*, were mainly the work of those in their thirties. The overthrow of Piero Soderini was the work of 'young men of the nobility' according to contemporaries.<sup>15</sup> Its leaders were 'young nobles',<sup>16</sup> they were accompanied by other 'young men' from noble families,<sup>17</sup> and it was with other 'young men' that Albizzi and the Rucellai took control of the Palace after Soderini had been forced to leave it.<sup>18</sup> All but one of those involved was under forty,

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<sup>11</sup> Appendix A, v.

<sup>12</sup> Appendix A, i; F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 143.

<sup>13</sup> Marzi, *Cancellaria*, pp. 618-9: A provision of April 1498 by which ambassadors were henceforward to be accompanied by a 'giovane cittadino' between the ages of twenty-four and forty.

<sup>14</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 326: A description of Filippo Strozzi, aged twenty-one, as 'garzone'; Trexler, *Public Life*, p. 388.

<sup>15</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 442.

<sup>16</sup> Vettori, 'Sommaro', p. 292; F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iii, p. 231.

<sup>17</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi., Ser. I, 360, f. 29<sup>r</sup>: Jacopo to Francesco Guicciardini, 3 September 1512; Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 156<sup>r</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 279; Idem, *Storia*, p. 442; Nardi, *Istorie*, i, p. 496.

<sup>18</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, pp. 308-9; Rinuccini, *Ricordi storici*, p. clxxiv; Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 443.

and apart from the twenty-five year old Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, the six leaders were all in their thirties, as were most of their accomplices.<sup>19</sup>

Most of these young men were to be at the forefront of those who urged the Medici to force the *parlamento*, and were amongst those 'young men', according to contemporaries, who accompanied Giuliano when he took over the Palace on 16 September.<sup>20</sup> Those involved were 'other young men, his friends' according to Prinzivalle della Stufa, who was one of their number.<sup>21</sup> The vast majority of those twenty-nine recorded to have taken part whose ages are known were under forty. Far from being very young however, as has been suggested,<sup>22</sup> only seven, a small minority, were under thirty, as many indeed as were over forty. Half of all those involved were in their thirties.

The plot of 1522 was described as the work of 'young men', and its two leaders, Buondelmonti and Alamanni, the poet, were both 'young'.<sup>23</sup> Alamanni was twenty-six and Buondelmonti thirty-one, and their accomplices in Florence were evenly split between those in their twenties, such as Martelli and the two executed conspirators, da Diacceto and Alamanni the soldier, and those in their thirties, such as della Palla and Brucioli. It is worth noting however, that some of their allies in Rome and elsewhere were older. Bernardo da Verrazzano was forty-five, Cardinal Soderini was sixty-nine, and his brother Tommaso, fifty-two.<sup>24</sup>

'Young nobles' (*giovani nobili*), according to contemporaries, were at the forefront of the *Tumulto del Venerdì*, just as they had been responsible for the violent assaults on the Palace in August and September 1512.<sup>25</sup> As on both occasions in 1512, it is probable that most of those young nobles in 1527 were in their thirties

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<sup>19</sup> See Appendix A, iii. The sons of Piero and Jacopo Pitti, ten individuals in all, who have not been listed, were also mostly in their thirties. A.S.F., Tratte, 88, ff. 11<sup>r</sup>, 21<sup>r</sup>, 38<sup>r</sup>, 53<sup>r</sup>, 75<sup>r</sup>, 89<sup>r</sup>; Ibid., 86, ff. 3<sup>v</sup>, 45<sup>v</sup>, 70<sup>r</sup>, 74<sup>r</sup>; Ibid., 419, ff. 4<sup>r</sup>, 14<sup>r</sup>, 32<sup>r</sup>, 42<sup>r</sup>, 56<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 81<sup>v</sup>; Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 448.

<sup>21</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xv, col. 141: Prinzivalle della Stufa to Piero da Bibbiena, 23 September 1512.

<sup>22</sup> Stephens, *Fall*, p. 63.

<sup>23</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 201, 203; Vettori, 'Sommaro', p. 342.

<sup>24</sup> Appendix A, vi.

<sup>25</sup> A.S.F., Otto di Pratica, Missive, 18, f. 168<sup>r</sup>: Letter to Domenico Canigiani, 21 May 1527; B.N.F., Magl. VIII, 1487, ins. 142: Paolo Benivieni to Bernardo Segni, 29 April 1527; F. Guicciardini, *Carteggi*, xiv, p. 5: Francesco Guicciardini to Gianmatteo Ghiberti, 26 April 1527; A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1109, f. 312<sup>v</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 26 April 1527.

rather than their twenties, but most of their leaders in 1527, unlike in 1512, were under the age of thirty. Piero and Giuliano Salviati, the two cousins who had led the young nobles since the demands for arms had first surfaced in the winter of 1526, were aged twenty-three and twenty respectively, and of their seven principal followers whose ages are known, all but one were in their twenties.<sup>26</sup>

The revolt was by no means solely the work of young men, and Niccolò Capponi, whom the Medici blamed equally with the Salviati for leading it, was in his fifties.<sup>27</sup> All of those fourteen leading citizens who are recorded with Capponi to have directed the revolt in its later stages from the room of the Gonfalonier were over forty, most were over fifty, and Francesco Martelli was seventy-one.<sup>28</sup> Only the thirty-eight year old Averardo Salviati, who was also held responsible with Capponi for leading the revolt, was *giovane*. Of the sixteen other citizens who distinguished themselves in the revolt whose ages are known, seven were in their twenties, and seven aged over forty.<sup>29</sup>

Clearly then, plots and the violent overthrow of regimes were almost always the work not of those in their twenties, but of young men in their thirties or just as commonly, men in their forties and fifties. It was young men in their thirties too, and their elders, who had headed plots in the past. Of the three leaders of the Pazzi plot in 1478, Jacopo de' Pazzi was aged fifty-six, while Francesco Salviati and Francesco de' Pazzi were both in their thirties, as indeed were the two other Pazzi most closely involved, Renato and Giovanni.<sup>30</sup> Amorotto Baldovinetti, one of the two leaders of the plot of 1481, was aged twenty-five,<sup>31</sup> but the other, Battista Frescobaldi, was probably in his thirties, and possibly as old as forty-five.<sup>32</sup> The two leaders of the plot of April 1494, Lorenzo and Giovanni di Pierfrancesco de' Medici, were aged thirty-one and twenty-seven respectively, and of their three accomplices,<sup>33</sup> Cosimo Rucellai

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<sup>26</sup> Appendix A, ix.

<sup>27</sup> Segni, 'Vita', p. 301.

<sup>28</sup> Appendix A, viii and x.

<sup>29</sup> Appendix A, xi.

<sup>30</sup> A. Poliziano, *Della congiura dei Pazzi (coniurationis commentarium)*, ed. A. Perosa (Padua, 1958), pp. 5, 14, 21, 51; P. Hurtubise, *Une famille-témoin. Les Salviati* (Città del Vaticano, 1985), p. 54.

<sup>31</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 23<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 156 (Frescobaldi), tav. v.

<sup>33</sup> For those involved see Parenti, *Storia*, ed. Matucci, i, pp. 68-72.

was twenty six, but Francesco Soderini was aged forty-four, and Zanobi Acciaiuoli was thirty-three.<sup>34</sup>

Since plots were mainly the work of men in their thirties or older, they cannot be explained as the work of those with wealth but without family responsibility, occupation or political privileges. Even those at the forefront of plots who were young men were mostly in their thirties and were eligible to office, indeed some had attained a measure of political prominence. Giannozzo Pucci in 1497, Vettori, Valori and Capponi in 1512, and Averardo Salviati in 1527, were all young men at the head of attempts to overthrow the regime who had held office in the *Signoria*, the Colleges, or the *Otto*.<sup>35</sup> Despite his youth, Filippo Strozzi had enjoyed a pre-eminent position as one of Lorenzo's most trusted counsellors and Depositor of the Pope,<sup>36</sup> but most young conspirators, although eligible to office, were excluded from the inner circles of the regime on account of their age. For membership of the *Dieci*, the *Otto di Pratica*, the Council of Seventy and other leading positions in the regime was restricted to those of forty years of age and over. Thus if young conspirators were at all impatient for political position denied to them by their youth, they were impatient for positions in the inner circles of the regime.

Young conspirators could award themselves, as Buondelmonti planned to in 1522, positions in the inner circles of the new regime they planned to establish, and such positions certainly formed part of the rewards of success. Three of the leaders of Soderini's overthrow, Albizzi, Vettori and Valori, and three of their accomplices, Giovanni Vespucci, Benedetto Buondelmonti and Maso degli Albizzi, were amongst eight men of 'minor age', below the qualifying age of forty, appointed by the *Signoria* to the Senate created by the reform of 7 September.<sup>37</sup> During the *parlamento* of 16 September, all these plotters, with the exception of Vettori, were to be amongst seven 'young men' made eligible by the *Signoria* to all the offices of the

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<sup>34</sup> For Rucellai see L. Passerini, *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Rucellai* (Florence, 1861), pp. 132, 175; for Acciaiuoli, see Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 104 (Acciaiuoli), tav. ii; for Soderini see Appendix A, vi.

<sup>35</sup> Appendix A: i, iii, and x.

<sup>36</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 128.

<sup>37</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, pp. 313, 322.

city 'despite their minor age'.<sup>38</sup> By this privilege, the twenty-five year old Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi was to sit in the *Otto di Guardia* in 1513, but all the others were in their thirties, and the privileges they gained were those of eligibility to the honours of the Gonfalonier and positions in the inner circles of the regime. However, none were to be granted such positions before they had reached the normal qualifying age,<sup>39</sup> although Valori was appointed orator to the imperial representative in Italy, the Bishop of Gurk, in October 1512,<sup>40</sup> and again a year later.<sup>41</sup>

Contemporaries certainly believed that one factor which discouraged men from engaging in plots against the regime was marriage and fatherhood. Niccolò Valori reflected this when, concerning his inclusion on Boscoli and Capponi's list of 'discontented men', he described himself as 'more averse to political change (*novità*) than was any man in this city' on the grounds that he was 'burdened with a family, and especially with children', as well as being wealthy and having had 'so many offices and honours' that he was 'sated' of them and 'wholly turned to the quiet life'.<sup>42</sup> Valori, aged forty-nine, had two sons and two daughters, all aged under twenty,<sup>43</sup> and that may have been one reason why he refused to get involved.

Yet just as those conspirators who were young were mostly in their thirties and eligible to political office, so they were usually married and often had children. Indeed, those few conspirators who were in their twenties were often married and had children. Again the archives of the *Tratte* are a useful source, at least concerning fatherhood. Without a similar record of marriages however, it is not possible to give a complete account of the family responsibilities of young plotters, but it can be shown however, that contrary to what has been supposed, almost all of those young conspirators at the head of plots, whether in their twenties or their thirties, were men with family responsibilities.

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<sup>38</sup> A.S.F., Balie 43, f. 31<sup>r</sup>: 'Habilitatio juvenum ad officio'.

<sup>39</sup> Appendix A, iii.

<sup>40</sup> A.S.F., Signori, Carteggi, Legazioni e Commissarie, Elezioni e Istruzioni a Oratori, 23, f. 100<sup>r</sup>; Masi, *Ricordanze*, p. 112.

<sup>41</sup> A.S.F., Otto di Pratica, Missive, 10, f. 9<sup>r</sup>. *Ibid.*, f. 6<sup>v</sup> records that Paolo Vettori was appointed a Commissioner in October 1513.

<sup>42</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 11<sup>v</sup>.

Two of the executed leaders of the plot of 1497, for example, were young men: Lorenzo Tornabuoni, aged twenty-nine; and Giannozzo Pucci, aged thirty-seven.<sup>44</sup> Pucci had been married three times,<sup>45</sup> Tornabuoni twice, and both had children.<sup>46</sup> Apart from Tornabuoni, Jacopo Gianfigliuzzi was the only other individual involved in the plot to be in his twenties, and he too had young children at the time.<sup>47</sup> The only two participants in their thirties whose family responsibilities are known, Galeazzo Sassetti and Francesco Cegia, both had children at the time of the plot.<sup>48</sup> One of the executed leaders of the plot of 1513, Pietropaolo Boscoli, was a 'young noble' aged thirty-two,<sup>49</sup> and he had a son,<sup>50</sup> although the other leader of the plot, Agostino Capponi, was still unmarried at forty-two.<sup>51</sup> Filippo Strozzi had children when he conspired against the Medici in 1526/7,<sup>52</sup> as did Averardo Salviati, one of the young leaders of the *Tumulto*.<sup>53</sup>

The overthrow of Soderini was the work of young men, but only two of its six leaders, Palla and Giovanni Rucellai, were unmarried at the time. The twenty-five year old Albizzi was married, and Capponi, Valori and Vettori all had children. Seven of their ten accomplices were married, and six had children.<sup>54</sup> Those eleven young men involved in the *parlamento* whose family responsibilities are known are fairly evenly split between those six who were unmarried at the time, and those five who were married, four with children, including two of those in their twenties.<sup>55</sup> Both Zanobi Buondelmonti and Luigi Alamanni, the young leaders of the conspiracy of

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<sup>44</sup> Appendix A, i.

<sup>45</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 158 (Pucci), tav. v.

<sup>46</sup> A.S.F., Tratte, 88, f. 230<sup>v</sup> records that Giovanni and Lionardo di Lorenzo Tornabuoni were born in 1487, and 1491 respectively. For his marriages and the birth of two daughters see Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 54 (Tornabuoni), tav. ii.

<sup>47</sup> A.S.F., Tratte, 88, ff. 206<sup>r</sup>, 221<sup>r</sup> records that Pierfilippo and Filippo di Jacopo Gianfigliuzzi were born in 1493 and February 1497 respectively.

<sup>48</sup> A.S.F., Tratte, 88, f. 220<sup>v</sup> records that Francesco di Galeazzo Sassetti was born in 1491. On Cegia see R. Ristori, 'Francesco Cegia', *D.B.I.*, xxiii, p. 324.

<sup>49</sup> Della Robbia, 'Recitazione', p. 284, and see Appendix A, v.

<sup>50</sup> C. Pincin, 'Pietropaolo Boscoli', *D.B.I.*, xiii, pp. 219-20.

<sup>51</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 5.

<sup>52</sup> A.S.F., Tratte, 88, ff. 273<sup>v</sup>, 284<sup>r</sup> (Roberto born in 1513, Vincenzo born in 1511). See also Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 71 (Strozzi), tav. xx.

<sup>53</sup> Hurtubise, *Salviati*, p. 498, records that Salviati had children born in 1513 and 1515.

<sup>54</sup> Appendix D, i.

<sup>55</sup> Appendix D, ii.

1522, had children at the time of the plot,<sup>56</sup> although it is probable that all of their young accomplices were unmarried, as della Palla,<sup>57</sup> Brucioli,<sup>58</sup> Tommaso, Giuliano and Piero di Paolantonio Soderini are known to have been.<sup>59</sup>

The protagonist of the plot of 1510, Prinzivalle della Stufa, was still unmarried in 1515,<sup>60</sup> and neither of the leaders of the young nobles in 1527, Piero and Giuliano Salviati, were married at the time of the *Tumulto*.<sup>61</sup> These were men in their twenties, and the plot of 1510 and the revolt of 1527 were the only occasions when attempts to overthrow the regime were led by young unmarried men. Yet there is no reason to suppose that the Salviati were typical of the young nobles in 1527, even if most were in their twenties. Indeed it would appear that many, perhaps most, were husbands and fathers. Of the seven other young men at the forefront of the revolt whose family responsibilities are known, all but one were in their twenties, yet all but one was married, and four had children..<sup>62</sup>

Thus there is no warrant for the notion that young men were a particular danger to the regime because they lacked family responsibility. Indeed the fact that young conspirators were married occasionally helps to explain their involvement in plots, to the extent that the marriage ties they shared with others involved helps to explain why they conspired together. Lorenzo Tornabuoni, for example, had been married since 1492 to the sister of Jacopo Gianfigliuzzi, with whom he conspired in 1497,<sup>63</sup> and Pucci had been married to the sister of another of the plotters, Luigi Bini, until her death in 1494.<sup>64</sup> Paolo Vettori was married to a niece of the Rucellai with whom he conspired in 1512.<sup>65</sup>

Most young conspirators were probably wealthy, but not all were, and the assumption that young conspirators also lacked occupation is contradicted by what

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<sup>56</sup> Machiavelli, *Lettere*, p. 509: Letter of 1 August 1520, which records the birth of a son to Buondelmonti. Alamanni had a son born in 1519. See Hauvette, *Luigi Alamanni*, p. 24.

<sup>57</sup> Brucioli, *Dialogi*, p. 59.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 556.

<sup>59</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 141 (Soderini), tavv. vi, vii.

<sup>60</sup> A.S.F., M.A.P., CXVI, n. 105: Luigi della Stufa to Lorenzo de' Medici, 6 February 1515.

<sup>61</sup> Appendix D, iii.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 54 (Tornabuoni), tav. ii.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, disp. 158 (Pucci), tav. v.

<sup>65</sup> Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. xi.

we know about the leaders of plots. Indeed their occupations and commercial activities often provided one reason for their involvement in conspiracies at all. We are already familiar with two of the most striking examples: Battista della Palla's discontent as a result of his fruitless quest for ecclesiastical position; and Lorenzo Tornabuoni's desperate need to avoid bankruptcy as a result of his take-over of the Medici bank.

Both young leaders of the plot of 1522 were partners in businesses at the time of the conspiracy: Buondelmonti in a goldsmith company and a wool and pelt merchants with branches in Lyons;<sup>66</sup> Alamanni in a wool business.<sup>67</sup> One of their young allies, Giovanbattista Soderini, was a partner in a firm with interests from Lucca to Antwerp.<sup>68</sup> Averardo Salviati had been a banker for some time before 1527.<sup>69</sup> Gino Capponi had a company in Pisa by 1509 and was a partner in others by 1512.<sup>70</sup> Paolo Vettori, another of the leaders of Soderini's overthrow, had owned and run, with his brother, an iron foundry producing arms and ammunition for some time before 1512, and his own goldsmith company also probably dates from before 1512.<sup>71</sup> As was the case with Tornabuoni, Vettori too, as we have seen, seems to have been moved to plot partly by the desire to escape the threat of insolvency resulting from the failure of his commercial activities, for which he may even have held Soderini responsible.<sup>72</sup>

Vettori was certainly debt-ridden, and was to abuse the position of treasurer of the clerical *decima*, granted him by the Pope in November 1513, to salvage the state of his finances.<sup>73</sup> He does not seem to have been the only individual involved in the events of 1512 moved by the desire to relieve his insolvency. Filippo Strozzi wrote to his brother on 4 September 1512 that amongst those pushing for a *parlamento* were 'some bankrupts, to whom ordinary ways are not useful', whereas

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<sup>66</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, ff. 34<sup>r</sup>, 38<sup>r-v</sup>, 43<sup>r-v</sup>, 51<sup>r</sup>; Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth*, p. 174.

<sup>67</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, ff. 22<sup>v</sup>, 42<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>68</sup> A.S.F., Sig., Minutari, 21, f. 46<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>69</sup> Hurtubise, *Salviati*, pp. 145, 147.

<sup>70</sup> E. Luttazzi, 'Gino Capponi', *D.B.I.*, xix, pp. 31-3.

<sup>71</sup> Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>72</sup> Segni, 'Vita', p. 282; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. 58.

<sup>73</sup> Bullard, *Filippo Strozzi*, p. 87.



'whoever is content with ordinary ways, and lives on his own means does not consent to it'.<sup>74</sup> When Guicciardini sought to explain in 1516 why those who were 'naturally enemies' of the Medici had been those 'few' who had favoured their return in 1512, he argued that 'desperation' and 'extreme necessity' had driven them to it.<sup>75</sup> They were 'bankrupts' and 'desperate men', who had worked for the return of the Medici only on account of 'extreme necessity', and through seeing 'no other way to secure their well-being'.<sup>76</sup> Clearly not all those at the head of plots can be considered wealthy men by patrician standards, and the desire of Vettori and others involved in the events of 1512 to stave off bankruptcy shows one reason why that was so.

If some of those young men at the head of plots were not rich, and had occupations, that may have been even more the case with some of their young and noble accomplices. Jacopo da Diacceto, a young noble in the plot of 1522,<sup>77</sup> was a professional man of letters, 'a learned youth but poor' according to contemporaries, on which account Cardinal Giulio had granted him a lectureship in the humanities.<sup>78</sup> This was a post at the *Studio* in Pisa which he is known to have held in 1521, at least for four months.<sup>79</sup> Niccolò Martelli, whose involvement in the plot of 1522 began with a commission from the French to deliver letters to Buondelmonti, was in substantial debt. He claimed in his examination to have assured one of his creditors on his departure from France that he would profit 'many hundreds of *scudi*' from fulfilling his commission.<sup>80</sup> Da Diacceto also claimed in his examination, as we have seen, that he had become involved in the plot solely on account of his poverty, and while such claims are to be treated with caution, they show a further reason why some of those young nobles involved in plots were poor men, by patrician standards, with occupations.

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<sup>74</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi., Ser. III, 178, f. 69<sup>v</sup>: Filippo to Lorenzo Strozzi, 4 September 1512.

<sup>75</sup> F. Guicciardini, 'Del modo di assicurare lo stato alla casa de' Medici', *Dialogo*, p. 274.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 267.

<sup>77</sup> Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 139.

<sup>78</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 403; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 204, 205; Vettori, 'Sommaro', p. 342; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xxxiii, col. 297.

<sup>79</sup> Tommasini, *Machiavelli*, ii, p. 1072.

<sup>80</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', pp. 266-7.

Another reason was the occupation itself. One of the young nobles executed in 1522, Luigi di Tommaso Alamanni, was a professional soldier, as was another of the plotters condemned, Alessandro Monaldi.<sup>81</sup> Alamanni, according to Vettori, had been for some months in the guard of Cardinal Giulio.<sup>82</sup> Certainly his 'experience of the art and skill of soldiery' had led him in January 1522 to be commissioned by the *Otto di Pratica* to command a company of 150 men.<sup>83</sup> In April he was one of those sent to guard Siena, as Renzo da Ceri approached Siennese territory,<sup>84</sup> and he was there with his company when he was arrested following the discovery of the plot.<sup>85</sup>

It was precisely because they were professional soldiers that Alamanni and Monaldi were recruited to the conspiracy. Monaldi confessed to having been given a horse and ten ducats by Buondelmonti and commissioned to tell Renzo da Ceri to leave Siena and approach Florence.<sup>86</sup> Alamanni confessed to having been approached by Buondelmonti specifically to kill Cardinal Giulio, which they decided was to take place while the Cardinal was dining with Buondelmonti. Buondelmonti and Alamanni the poet had found him the hatchet with which the soldier wished to commit the deed.<sup>87</sup> At some stage Buondelmonti seems to have intended Alamanni to commit the murder in the Duomo, together with his 'companions and retainers' (*compagni et sgherri*), a reference perhaps to his company.<sup>88</sup>

Alamanni provides a stark illustration of the way in which those involved in plots, were involved for a purpose, and even recruited to order. The leaders of conspiracies found accomplices because they needed them, and the involvement of any individual or group in plots is to be partly explained by the reasons for which they were asked to participate. Most young noble conspirators were wealthy, they were from the wealthiest section of society, and some may have lacked occupation,

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<sup>81</sup> Anon., 'Cronica', f. 147<sup>v</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 403.

<sup>82</sup> Vettori, 'Sommaro', p. 342.

<sup>83</sup> A.S.F., *Otto di Pratica*, Missive, 10, f. 44<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>84</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 399.

<sup>85</sup> B.N.F., F.P., II VI 51, f. 118<sup>v</sup>: Agnolo Marzi to Bartolomeo Valori, 27 May 1522; A.S.F., *Otto di Pratica*, Responsive, 25, f. 178<sup>v</sup>: Letter of Bartolomeo Valori, 27 May 1522; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, pp. 204-5; Masi, *Ricordanze*, p. 258, Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 139.

<sup>86</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 182, ff. 32<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>87</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 406.

<sup>88</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', p. 245.

but the significance of their wealth was not that it made them 'playboys', as has been suggested, but that wealth, just as Alamanni's ability to kill in cold blood, was a resource essential for the leaders of plots and their accomplices to possess.

The significant fact about those conspirators who were young nobles, was not their youth but their nobility. For it was nobility, not youth, that they possessed in common with other conspirators, and which distinguished them from the other discontented. The best illustration of that is to compare the conspirators with those condemned for verbal offences against the regime. The ages of twenty-nine of those condemned are known, all of them from families in the major or minor guilds (Table Two). The clear majority, two thirds, were forty years of age or over. Thus a higher proportion of those condemned for verbal offences were forty years or over than of those involved in plots, but conspiracies were as much and as often the work of men in their forties and fifties as they were of younger men.

Table Two

Ages of those from families in the guilds condemned for verbal offences against the regime

	18 - 29 yrs	30 - 39 yrs	40 - 49 yrs	Over 50 yrs	Age Unknown	Total
1502-12	0	0	0	1	0	1
1512-27	4	4	7	8	3	26
1527-30	2	0	3	1	0	6
Total	6	4	10	9	3	33

Sources: See Appendix A, xii and xiii.

Whether young or old however, most conspirators were from the same social and political group. They were mostly from noble families of some political prominence, often the leading families in the city. The contrast with the social and political background of those condemned for verbal offences is very marked indeed.

As Table Three shows, under a third of those condemned for verbal offences were from noble families, and nobles were fewer than those from other families in the guilds, major or minor. Only half of those condemned were from noble families or ordinary families in the major guilds. However, of the one hundred and twelve conspirators, two-thirds were from noble families, and all but eight were either from noble families or from ordinary families in the major guilds.<sup>89</sup>

Table Three

Social background of those condemned for verbal offences against the regime

	Nobles	Other Major Guilds	Minor Guilds	Identified by Trade	Identified by Place of Origin	Friars	Total
1502-12	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1512-27	12	10	5	3	4	7	40
1527-30	2	3	0	0	1	2	9
Total	15	13	5	3	5	9	50

Sources: See Appendix A, xii and xiii.

One third of those condemned for verbal offences were from groups outside of the guild structure and political society. Half of these were friars, and half, identified in their condemnations either by trade (two weavers and a footman), or by their parish or other place of origin, can be said to have been members of the *popolo minuto*.<sup>90</sup> Since most were not condemned in the company of members of the guilds or the nobility, most would seem to have been expressing their own discontent, rather than that of their social superiors. A footman (*staffiero*) and one Tonione di Lionardo from Bologna were condemned with a member of a noble family, Giovanni

<sup>89</sup> Seventy-four were from noble families, and thirty from ordinary families in the major guilds. See Chapter Six, Table One. The figures for the *Tumulto del Venerdì* have been discounted.

<sup>90</sup> Cohn, *Labouring Classes*, pp. 37-8, 67-9.

Guicciardini,<sup>91</sup> and three of the friars were those condemned with Bartolomeo Redditi in 1513. These are the only two cases of their kind however, and Parenti's account of the latter does not suggest that the friars had been any more than encouraged to prophesy by the two members of the major guilds condemned with them.<sup>92</sup>

Only half of those condemned for verbal offences were nobles or from families in the major guilds. Equally, in the cases of only one half of those condemned, had either they or their fathers held important political office (Table Four). However, ninety-one of the one hundred and twelve conspirators, eighty percent, were prominent citizens or from prominent families. In the cases of fifty-three, one half of those involved in plots, either they or their fathers had held positions in the inner circles of the regime.<sup>93</sup>

Table Four

Political background of those from families in the guilds condemned for verbal offences

	Inner Circles	Prominent Office	No Office	Total
1502-12	1	0	0	1
1512-27	9	11	5	26
1527-30	1	3	2	6
Total	12	13	7	33

Sources: See Appendix A, xii and xiii.

As Table four shows, only a small minority of those condemned for verbal offences had either themselves or their fathers held positions within the inner circles of the regime. And in six of these twelve cases, those were positions on the very

<sup>91</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 158, f. 7<sup>r</sup> (10 January 1514): Condemnation 'pro conservatione presentis pacificis optimi status et regiminis populi Florentini' to be banished from Florentine jurisdiction for three years.

<sup>92</sup> Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, ff. 93<sup>r</sup>, 94<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>93</sup> See Chapter Six, Table Two. Again, the figures for the *Tumulto del Venerdì* have been discounted.

margins of the inner circles of government, limited to only a few occasions on which those concerned had spoken in *pratiche* on their own behalf.<sup>94</sup> Luigi Manelli was one of these, and he had held no office, so Cerretani described him as a man of 'noble family but of little authority'.<sup>95</sup>

Thus amongst those condemned for verbal offences there were 'principal citizens' such as Piero Orlandini and Carlo Cocchi,<sup>96</sup> men who were both 'very noble' and 'of authority', as Orlandini was described at the time of his offence.<sup>97</sup> But just as commonly those condemned were from outside the guild structure and political society, and that was the case both during the Medici regime and the last republic. The political and social background of those condemned for verbal offences reveals that discontent with both Medicean and popular government was felt and openly expressed by members of every section of Florentine society, both within the ruling orders and outside them, by those of every level of political prominence or obscurity. Conspiracy however, was the almost exclusive preserve of nobles and those from the major guilds, and most members of most plots were from noble families of political prominence, commonly the leading noble families of the city. The leaders of plots were almost always from the city's leading noble families.

All plots against a prince were made by 'great men' or his most intimate associates, Machiavelli explained in the *Discourses*, because no one else, unless they were 'completely mad' (*matto*), could conspire against a prince. 'Weak men' (*uomini deboli*) and those not close to a prince, Machiavelli explained, lacked all the qualities and resources the execution of a plot required. 'Weak men' had little to ensure that men kept their faith with them, and would eventually be betrayed. Without access to the prince they were bound to fail in the execution of their plan, and being 'weak' all the difficulties involved during and after the deed itself 'increase without end'.<sup>98</sup> When those who saw themselves to be weak were discontented with a prince, they

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<sup>94</sup> Appendix A, xii and xiii.

<sup>95</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 317.

<sup>96</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, f. 2<sup>r</sup>: 'Cittadini principali'. This list names Orlandini and Donato di Messer Antonio Cocchi and his 'fratelli'.

<sup>97</sup> A.S.M., A.G., Estera, 1108, f. 207<sup>v</sup>: Giovanni Borromeo to the Marquis, 26 November 1523, 'nobilissimo ... e d' auctorità'.

<sup>98</sup> Machiavelli, 'Discorsi', III vi, *Opere* (1954), p. 323.

cursed him and waited for those of 'greater quality' to act against him. If weak men ever did conspire against a prince, Machiavelli argued, they should be praised for their intention, and not for their prudence.<sup>99</sup>

There was a plot in Florence in our period by the weak, that of 1513 against the Medici, and Machiavelli was almost certainly thinking of it when he wrote the passage above only three or four years later. For he had been one of those arrested, examined and imprisoned in connection with the conspiracy, after his name was found to have been included on the list of potential supporters drawn up by the leaders of the plot.<sup>100</sup> Both Giuliano and the *Dieci* sought to impress upon their representatives abroad that the plot was no more than a 'messy muddle without any order', a 'bad intention with little order, without foundation or following', and that its leaders, Boscoli and Capponi, were 'young men', although noble, 'without reputation, or following or power'.<sup>101</sup> To emphasize the rashness and weakness of the plot, the regime described it as the work of 'imprudent youths', moved by 'youthful passions and desires' and with no other foundation than the 'desires and passions of young men'.<sup>102</sup>

At forty-two however, Capponi was an elderly youth, and it was usual for the regime to emphasize to its ambassadors abroad the lack of quality of those found to have conspired against it. Contemporaries rightly described the leaders of the plot of 1497 as 'primarii' and 'extremely wealthy',<sup>103</sup> remarked upon the 'authority and grandness' of Ridolfi and del Nero,<sup>104</sup> and noted that they were two of the 'leaders' of the city.<sup>105</sup> Yet both the *Signoria* and the *Dieci* wrote relentlessly that the plot was of 'little' and 'weak foundation', 'few men of quality were involved', the

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., pp. 323-4.

<sup>100</sup> Machiavelli was found to have been uninvolved in the plot, and was not officially condemned by the *Otto* to any punishment. However, Cerretani records that Machiavelli was sentenced to life imprisonment in the Stinche, and he was only released on 12 March 1513 as a result of the elevation of Cardinal Giovanni to the Papacy. Cerretani, *Ricordi*, pp. 299-300; Parenti, 'Storia', II IV 171, f. 85<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>101</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balia, Missive, 39, ff. 161<sup>v</sup>-2<sup>r</sup>: Dieci to Piero Martelli, 19 February 1513; Sanudo, *Diarii*, xv, col. 573; Ibid., xvi, col. 25: Giuliano de' Medici to Piero da Bibbiana, 19 February and 7 March 1513.

<sup>102</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balia, Missive, 39, ff. 162<sup>v</sup>-3<sup>r</sup>: Dieci to Roberto Acciaiuoli, 22 February 1513.

<sup>103</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, i, col. 723: Letter of Antonio Vincivera, 24 August 1497.

<sup>104</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, p. 239.

<sup>105</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 142.

conspirators were 'of not much quality', and there was 'no person of condition' amongst them.<sup>106</sup> However, whilst the regime's descriptions of the weakness of the plotters of 1513 should not be taken at face value, as they have been,<sup>107</sup> Boscoli and Capponi were the least prominent and thus the most weak of those who led conspiracies against the regime, for uniquely amongst the leaders of plots, as we have seen, neither they nor their fathers had held office.

Both obscure men in political terms, Boscoli and Capponi were certainly perceived by Niccolò Valori to lack those qualities necessary to conspire successfully against the regime. Valori recorded that he had sought to discourage Boscoli from proceeding with the plot partly on the grounds that 'they were not men for such affairs'.<sup>108</sup> The weakest of those who conspired against the regime, they met their demise in the way that Machiavelli later warned was often the fate of conspiracies by the weak: they were betrayed. It is usually assumed,<sup>109</sup> following the accounts of Vettori, Nardi and Nerli, that the plot was uncovered when the conspirators' list of possible supporters fell by chance into the hands of a Sienese secretary, although Nerli wondered whether Capponi had not confided in him.<sup>110</sup> However, Niccolò Valori explained at the time, as did Masi and later Baldovinetti, that the plot was uncovered when a man to whom the conspirators had confided their plans, Lamberto Cambi, informed the authorities.<sup>111</sup>

Valori even accused Cambi, although he was on the list of opponents drawn up before the conspiracy,<sup>112</sup> of provoking Boscoli to plot so that he could inform on him, either at the instigation of Medici partisans eager for an occasion to banish their enemies, or solely for his own purposes. 'A true traitor' wrote Valori, 'he thought by this means to enter into their grace'.<sup>113</sup> Cambi was rewarded with remunerative

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<sup>106</sup> A.S.F., Dieci di Balìa, Missive, 20, ff. 60<sup>r</sup>, 61<sup>r</sup>, 62<sup>r</sup>, 64<sup>r</sup>, 68<sup>r</sup>, 71<sup>v</sup>, 73<sup>v</sup>: Letters of 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 19 and 21 August 1497; Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, p. xlvi: Letter of Signoria, 10 August 1497.

<sup>107</sup> Villari, *Machiavelli*, ii, p. 198.

<sup>108</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>109</sup> Villari, *Machiavelli*, ii, p. 198.

<sup>110</sup> Vettori, 'Sommario', p. 295; Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, pp. 25-6; Nerli, *Commentari*, p. 123.

<sup>111</sup> Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 159<sup>v</sup>; Masi, *Ricordanze*, pp. 117-8.

<sup>112</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988. f. 92<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>113</sup> N. Valori, 'Ricordanze', ff. 17<sup>v</sup>-18<sup>r</sup>.



minor office in May 1513 at Giuliano's behest,<sup>114</sup> and a position in the Colleges in 1514,<sup>115</sup> but he remained a well-known and listed opponent of the regime, and was amongst those detained in 1521.<sup>116</sup>

Unlike the conspirators of 1513, Prinzivalle della Stufa, the protagonist of the plot of 1510, was from a leading noble family, the son of a leading member of the inner circles of the popular government. Yet he too was perceived to lack the qualities necessary to conspire against the regime, and it becomes clear that one reason for that was because of his youth. Cerretani did not believe that della Stufa had or would have found accomplices, because no 'men of account' would have trusted him, since he was only in his twenties. He also lacked wealth, intelligence, judgement, and 'credit' amongst other young men, 'did not know how to speak' and was not 'esteemed' in any way.<sup>117</sup> Rather, according to Cerretani, della Stufa was considered to be an 'ordinary youth' of 'not much wisdom' and 'little substance' (*da pocho*), and thus his involvement in the plot was said to astonish his contemporaries, who could not believe the 'madness' of those in Bologna who had entrusted him with such an enterprise.<sup>118</sup> Lorenzo Strozzi was one who believed that Colonna and the Pope had quite undeservedly attributed to della Stufa the reputation and credit of a person 'bold and capable of conducting such undertakings' and indeed that della Stufa had agreed to their plans in order not to lose such a reputation.<sup>119</sup> Strozzi's brother, Filippo, may have been of the same opinion, and that may have been one reason for his refusal to get involved, which led to the plot's early demise.

Cerretani's remark concerning the improbability that men of account would have trusted a young man of twenty-six enough to agree to conspire with him helps to explain why, contrary to what has been assumed, so few of those at the head of conspiracies were in their twenties. Men of such a young age, even if from prominent noble families as della Stufa was, generally lacked that reputation, following and

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<sup>114</sup> B.N.F., Ginori Conti, 29, 41 (unfoliated): Giuliano de' Medici to Ser Niccolò Michelozzi, 30 May 1513.

<sup>115</sup> A.S.F., Tratte, 61, f. 125<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>116</sup> B.N.F., N.A., 988, ff. 93<sup>r</sup>, 94<sup>v</sup>, 98<sup>r</sup>, 103<sup>r</sup>, 162<sup>r</sup>; Appendix C.

<sup>117</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 237.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 230, 231; Cerretani, *Storia*, pp. 398, 399, 405.

<sup>119</sup> Strozzi, 'Vita', p. xxvi.

power, necessary to attract support. Lorenzo Tornabuoni and Piero Salviati however, were two young nobles in their twenties who possessed those qualities in abundance, and a prime reason for that was that unlike della Stufa they were both extremely wealthy men. Tornabuoni, one of the leaders of the plot of 1497, was renowned as one of the richest men in the city, and one of the most popular, on account of his nobility, virtues and wealth.<sup>120</sup> He was described by one contemporary, who estimated his worth at over a hundred thousand ducats, as one of the 'most powerful' of men, both for his 'following' (*seguito*) and for his wealth.<sup>121</sup> Salviati was also extremely rich,<sup>122</sup> and it was his great wealth and marriage connections with leading citizens, as Varchi recognized, that made him the leader of the young nobles in 1527.<sup>123</sup>

Like Salviati and Tornabuoni, most of those young conspirators at the head of plots were also wealthy men from leading noble families, and clearly the most significant fact about their wealth was not that it made them 'playboys', but that together with their nobility it was the basis of their ability to attract supporters and gather the other disaffected around them, just as it was for their elder counterparts. Plots were almost always led by those both young and old from leading families because conspiracy was a strategy beyond anyone else's reach. Those from leading families could hope to conspire most successfully against the regime, and those who were leading members of the inner circles of the regime they were attempting to overthrow, such as Filippo Strozzi and the other conspirators of 1526/7, could hope to conspire most successfully of all. Strozzi's position had already been such by 1523 that Machiavelli told Cardinal Giulio, according to Busini, that no one could 'better and more securely conspire against the regime' than Strozzi.<sup>124</sup>

The leaders of plots were almost all from leading families because they needed to be, and that their accomplices were almost all from prominent or leading noble families was also because they needed to be. For these families could most

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<sup>120</sup> Cerretani, *Storia*, pp. 217, 237.

<sup>121</sup> Villari, *Savonarola*, ii, p. xxxiii: Paolo Somenzi to the Duke of Milan, 6 August 1497.

<sup>122</sup> Segni, *Storie*, i, p. 7.

<sup>123</sup> Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 92.

<sup>124</sup> Busini, *Lettere*, p. 115.

easily provide those financial and military resources considered essential for success. There was a need, as Machiavelli described, for trustworthy accomplices whose loyalty could be depended upon,<sup>125</sup> and who could provide a means of communication between the others involved, and that probably accounts for most of the very few conspirators who were obscure men in social and political terms. Luca Speranzini, for example, was described at the time of the plot of 1497 as the ‘steward’ of Giovanni Cambi,<sup>126</sup> and his condemnation refers to him carrying letters and replies.<sup>127</sup> Francesco Naldini was commissioned by Tornabuoni and Pucci, according to Tornabuoni’s examination, to convey a message to Piero.<sup>128</sup> Antonio Brucioli is a unique example of a Florentine from outside the guilds condemned as a conspirator, rather than an accomplice, whose condemnation with Buondelmonti and Alamanni in 1522 denies him the status of *civis* given to them, and identifies him only by his parish.<sup>129</sup> He was an associate of theirs from the Rucellai gardens, and a client, even a dependant, of Alamanni, according to contemporaries.<sup>130</sup>

Yet if some accomplices were needed solely on account of their loyalty to the leaders of the plot, the vast majority were to provide those resources for which accomplices were needed most: money and arms. These were resources most often sought and found in those from prominent and leading noble families, and that is why it was from these families that most conspirators came. Money was needed particularly to raise those forces that were to approach the city’s gates. Piero de’ Medici requested seven or eight thousand ducats from Pucci, Ridolfi, Tornabuoni and the other conspirators in March 1497 to finance his expedition, and Pucci, known for his wealth,<sup>131</sup> confessed to have agreed to supply Piero with funds.<sup>132</sup> Pucci had

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<sup>125</sup> Machiavelli, ‘Discorsi’, III, vi, *Opere* (1954), pp. 325-6.

<sup>126</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, i, col. 723.

<sup>127</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 108, f. 131<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>128</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I, 360, f. 12<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>129</sup> A.S.F., O. G., 182, ff. 34<sup>r</sup>, 39<sup>r</sup>, 59<sup>r</sup>; *Ibid.*, 223 (Libro di Bandi), ff. 188<sup>r-v</sup>. All give Antonio di Francesco del Bruciolo da San Niccolò. The del Bruciolo family are recorded as holding the Priorate in the fifteenth century as members of the minor guilds. See G. Mecatti, *Storia genealogica della nobiltà e cittadinanza di Firenze* (Naples, 1756), p. 308. It is possible that he or his father were enrolled in the minor guilds although due to the casual nature of their work recognised by notaries as effectively outside the guild system. See Cohn, *Labouring Classes*, pp. 42-3.

<sup>130</sup> Nardi, *Istorie*, ii, p. 86; Varchi, *Storia*, i, p. 52.

<sup>131</sup> F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, p. 142.

<sup>132</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I, 360, f. 18<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Giannozzo Pucci.

told Piero that he believed Ridolfi and Tornabuoni would have difficulty raising the money, but it seems that Lorenzo Tornabuoni did serve Piero with funds for his expedition, perhaps two thousand *scudi*.<sup>133</sup> Money came apparently too from Nofri Tornabuoni in Rome although Lorenzo confessed to have known nothing of this.<sup>134</sup> Lucrezia Salviati, Piero's sister, and the only woman in the period found to have been involved in conspiracy, confessed to have spent three thousand ducats without the knowledge of her husband to have her brother return to Florence.<sup>135</sup>

The money for Renzo da Ceri's expedition in 1522 was to come from Cardinal Soderini, although it was to be paid back by the King of France, as were over twenty-five thousand ducats.<sup>136</sup> Soderini was believed in Florence to have spent thirty-six thousand ducats on the expedition.<sup>137</sup> The role of Bernardo da Verrazzano, a Florentine banker in Rome, was to administer the finances of the expedition.<sup>138</sup> Niccolò Martelli later stated in his examination that da Verrazzano, and both Giovanbattista and Tommaso di Paolantonio Soderini had each provided two and a half thousand ducats for the Cardinal for Renzo's expedition. He also named Giovanni Rinuccini, Giovanvettorino Soderini and Giovanni Girolami, the Cardinal's secretary, as amongst those who provided funds, as well as perhaps Piero del Bene and Pandolfo della Casa,<sup>139</sup> who were both, as da Verrazzano, Florentine bankers in Rome.<sup>140</sup> However, none of these men was amongst those condemned. The finance for these expeditions came from conspirators both young and old, often professional bankers, and the need for financial resources was one reason why conspiracy was as much the work of the old as the young.

Accomplices were also needed to take control of the Palace of the *Signoria*, and establish command of the city, and those from prominent and leading noble families were best able to provide the human and military resources necessary.

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<sup>133</sup> Cei, 'Storia', ff. 49<sup>v</sup>, 51<sup>r</sup>; F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, i, p. 287.

<sup>134</sup> A.S.F., C. Strozzi, Ser. I, 360, f. 12<sup>v</sup>: Examination of Lorenzo Tornabuoni.

<sup>135</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, i, col. 723: Letter of Antonio Vincivera, 24 August 1497.

<sup>136</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', pp. 250, 260; F. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, iv, p. 165.

<sup>137</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 402.

<sup>138</sup> A.S.F., Otto di Pratica, Responsive, 25, f. 355<sup>r</sup> (26 July 1522); Lowe, *Francesco Soderini*, p. 127.

<sup>139</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', p. 244.

<sup>140</sup> M. Bullard, "'Mercatores Florentini Romanum Curiam sequentes'" in the early sixteenth century', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, vi (1976), p. 55 n. 18.

Tommaso Soderini had promised to provide for Buondelmonti in 1522 both money and two thousand men from Lucca, according to Niccolò Martelli,<sup>141</sup> and Buondelmonti's plan, according to Martelli, was that as Renzo and the other foreign forces approached the city, Buondelmonti, Alamanni the poet, and other citizens involved would assemble armed men in their houses under cover of saving both their property and the regime. At the appointed moment the plotters on one side of the Arno would take control of the Palace, and those in the Oltrarno would take control of one of the city's gates to admit Renzo's forces.<sup>142</sup> According to Martelli, Buondelmonti had a list of those whom he intended to ask to take part in this, with whom he had not conferred his plans by the time of the discovery of the plot. Martelli names eight individuals, including Niccolò Capponi and Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, whom Buondelmonti particularly wanted to recruit to the plot. Those who had been examined about the plot of 1513 were also to be sought out, particularly Niccolò Valori, Piero Orlandini and Daniello Strozzi, as were all those opponents banished in August 1517.<sup>143</sup>

These were discontented men but Buondelmonti needed more than just their discontent. It was for this reason that Martelli, under the impression that Buondelmonti wanted to recruit Niccolò Machiavelli, the author of the *Discourses*, warned that on account of his poverty and known opposition to the Medici family Machiavelli would be unable to assemble armed men in his house unsuspected. Buondelmonti assured him however, that his interest was in another Niccolò Machiavelli, who was rich and capable of doing as Buondelmonti planned.<sup>144</sup> Wealth was the most important quality that Buondelmonti needed in those he hoped to involve in the plot.

Machiavelli, the political thinker, had been one of those whom the conspirators of 1513 had hoped to include in their planned attempt to overthrow the regime. Fifteen individuals including Machiavelli, are known to have been examined in connection with the plot, all of whom had probably been on the list of potential

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<sup>141</sup> 'Processo di Niccolò Martelli', p. 247.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., pp. 243-4.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 244. See also Ridolfi, *Machiavelli*, p. 203.

supporters drawn up by the conspirators.<sup>145</sup> There were probably others amongst them, besides Machiavelli, who lacked wealth, such as the two priests from the Tosinghi and Martini families, but most were noble, and most had either themselves or their fathers held prominent if not leading political office,<sup>146</sup> and that is why both the plotters of 1513 and later Buondelmonti hoped to recruit them.

Wealth was important to the strategy of Buondelmonti, where youth was not, nor had it been in 1513. To his agent in Venice Giuliano described those on Boscoli's list of potential supporters as 'young men',<sup>147</sup> yet six of the thirteen whose ages are known were over forty years of age, and none was under the age of thirty.<sup>148</sup> Nine years on, when Buondelmonti wanted to recruit them, those named in 1513 were all over forty years of age, and six were in their fifties, including Valori, Orlandini and Strozzi, whose involvement Buondelmonti particularly desired. All of those twenty-three opponents banished in 1517 were over 50 in 1522, apart from four who were nevertheless in their forties. Seven were aged over sixty.<sup>149</sup> Of the eight individuals whom Buondelmonti particularly wanted to involve, Filippo degli Albizzi and Antonio Strozzi were both in their sixties,<sup>150</sup> Alfonso Strozzi was fifty-five,<sup>151</sup> Niccolò Capponi forty-nine, and the Niccolò Machiavelli probably referred to was

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<sup>145</sup> Niccolò Valori, Giovanni Folchi, Lodovico de' Nobili, Francesco Serragli, Niccolò Machiavelli, Andrea Marsuppini, Piero Orlandini, Daniello Strozzi, Francesco Tosinghi, a priest of the Martini family, Pandolfo Biliotti, Duccio Adimari, Giovanni di Ser Antonio Bartolomei, Ubertino Boncianni and Tosingho Tosinghi, a priest. See Sanudo, *Diarii*, xv, col. 574: Giuliano de' Medici to Piero da Bibbiena, 19 February 1513; Baldovinetti, 'Memoriale', f. 159<sup>v</sup>; Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 299; Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 5; Vaglianti, *Storia*, p. 237.

<sup>146</sup> Ten were noble, four from families in the major guilds, one from the minor guilds. Seven were from prominent families, three from leading families. The political and social background of all but Niccolò Machiavelli and Andrea Marsuppini can be found in Appendix A. Neither Machiavelli nor his father had ever held office. The father of Andrea di Cristoforo Marsuppini held office only once, a seat in the Colleges in 1507, A.S.F., *Tratte*, 61, f. 67<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>147</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, xvi, col. 25: Giuliano de' Medici to Piero da Bibbiena, 7 March 1513.

<sup>148</sup> The date of birth of all but two can be found in Appendix A. Machiavelli was born in 1469, Marsuppini in 1483. A.S.F., *Tratte*, 88, f. 97<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>149</sup> The date of birth of ten can be found in Appendix A. The date of birth of twelve others can be found in A.S.F., *Tratte*, 419, ff. 1<sup>f</sup>-99<sup>v</sup>. For Buongirolami, born in 1472, see A.S.F., *Tratte*, 88, f. 289<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>150</sup> Albizzi was born in 1464, Strozzi in 1467. A.S.F., *Tratte*, 419, ff. 9<sup>f</sup>, 37<sup>v</sup>; *Ibid.*, 85, f. 236<sup>v</sup>; 86, f. 167<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>151</sup> A.S.F., *Tratte*, 419, f. 9<sup>f</sup>; *Ibid.*, 86, f. 167<sup>v</sup>.

aged seventy-three.<sup>152</sup> Only two, Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi and Filippo Nerli, are known to have been under forty.<sup>153</sup>

The plot of 1522 was one of those led by young men, who found their first accomplices mostly amongst young men. Yet those whom Buondelmonti was further wanting to involve were almost all older men, many aged over fifty, and indeed if the plot had proceeded as Buondelmonti planned, most of its members may have been older rather than younger men. At the very least, those involved, as in 1497, would have been neither predominantly young nor old, for it was wealth not youth that was the most important quality Buondelmonti needed in his accomplices.

Prinzivalle della Stufa however, wanted accomplices mainly for their youth, rather than their wealth. He is recorded to have told Filippo Strozzi in 1510 that he was planning to seize the Palace with other 'young men' and they would overthrow the regime.<sup>154</sup> It was young nobles who provided the arms for each violent assault on the Palace in our period, and the central role of young nobles in the overthrow of Soderini, the *parlamento* of September 1512 and the *Tumulto del Venerdì* of 1527 is to be partly explained by the fact that young nobles were a military resource. The most important fact about the youth and nobility of those involved was not that these qualities meant that they were without family responsibility, occupation or political rights. Indeed, those involved in the events of August and September 1512 were mostly men in their thirties and thus eligible to political office, and often husbands and fathers. Unmarried men in their twenties were at the head of the young nobles in 1527 but the real significance of the youth and nobility of those involved in the *Tumulto*, as in the events of 1512, was that they afforded them arms and the ability to wield them. In their twenties or thirties, with families, occupations, and political office or not, young nobles were a military resource, and that is why della Stufa sought them in 1510, why first the leaders of Soderini's overthrow and then the Medici sought them in 1512, and why those who desired to overthrow the regime desired to arm them in 1527.

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 419, f. 68<sup>v</sup> (Niccolò di Alessandro di Filippo Machiavelli).

<sup>153</sup> Nerli was born in 1485, A.S. F., *Tratte*, 419, f. 31<sup>f</sup>. On Albizzi, see Appendix A, iii.

<sup>154</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 230; Idem, *Storia*, p. 398.

To the extent that those at the head of the young nobles in 1527 were almost all under thirty, the *Tumulto del Venerdì* was almost the only occasion in the period when an attempt to overthrow the regime could be said to have been the work of young men in their twenties. In leading the revolt in 1527 young men under thirty played a quite unprecedented role in public affairs, at least in terms of the city's recent past. It was a role too, which those same young men were to continue to play during the last republic as the *adirati*, the young *arrabbiati*. That there were plots against the regime is not to be explained in any way, as it has been, by the social and political factors of the late age of marriage and fatherhood amongst the wealthiest sections of Florentine society, and the exclusion from public life of those under thirty.

Many plots were mainly even wholly the work of men in their forties and fifties, and such plots were just as common as those by younger men. There were plots that the work of *giovani*, but it was not true that young nobles were a particular danger to the regime because they lacked family responsibility, occupation and political privileges. The plot of 1510 and the *Tumulto* of 1527 were the only occasions when young unmarried men can be found at the head of attempts to overthrow the regime. Those plots that were the work of *giovani* were mostly the work of young men in their thirties, at the beginning of their political and commercial careers, normally married, often with children. Indeed that they had family responsibilities, occupations, and commercial careers often helps to explain their involvement in plots at all.

That plots were as commonly the work of the old as of the young, and mostly led by men with family responsibility, serves to emphasize the significance of the reasons for which conspirators risked their lives and the welfare of their families to attempt to overthrow the regime. It was the reasons for which men conspired against the regime, not their youth, that made the risks involved seem worth taking. The significant fact about those involved in conspiracy was not their age but that they were mostly from prominent or leading noble families. For it was this, not youth that conspirators had in common, and it was this, not youth, that distinguished them from the other discontented. Those who led and participated in plots were mostly from



prominent and leading noble families because it was members of these families who could hope to lead plots most successfully against the regime, and who possessed the financial and military resources the leaders of plots considered essential for success. Young nobles were a military resource and that is why they played a central role in the violent assaults on the Palace in August and September 1512 and April 1527.

## Conclusion

Discontent with every regime in Florence after 1494, with both the Medici and popular government, was felt and openly expressed by members of every section of Florentine society, both within the ruling orders and outside them, by those from every level of political prominence or obscurity. That much is evident from those condemned for verbal offences against the regime throughout the period. However, it was only those from noble families and families in the major guilds who possessed the financial and military resources that plots required, and thus conspiracy was the almost exclusive preserve of nobles and those from the major guilds. Most members of most plots were from noble families of political prominence, commonly the leading noble families of the city. The leaders of plots were almost always from the city's leading noble families.

There is no warrant for the notion that plots were the work of reckless youths. Contrary to what has been assumed, plots in Florence were almost never the work of rich young men devoid of family responsibility, occupation and political rights. Many plots were mainly even wholly the work of men in their forties and fifties, and such plots were just as common as those by younger men. Many plots, but certainly not most of them, were the work of those who were young by contemporary standards. However, most of those conspirators who were young were in their thirties, and thus not only eligible to political office, but many had also actually held it. They were usually married, often had children, and at the beginning of their commercial or other careers, and that indeed was also the case with many of those few young conspirators who were only in their twenties.

It was the decision of conspirators to attempt to overthrow the regime rather than their discontent which distinguished them from other opponents. But they emerged from a society in which it was commonly assumed that there were reasons for which it was, or at least might be, worth risking one's life to plot against the

regime. It was the reasons for which conspirators attempted to overthrow regimes, rather than their youth, which made the risks involved seem worth taking.

Plots emphasize the primacy of a hitherto neglected aspect of political conflict in Florence, and thus of the reasons for the instability of Florentine political life in the early sixteenth century. That instability is often explained in terms of the desire of the *ottimati* for an ascendant place in government uncontested by either the Medici or the *popolo*. However, only a few plots sought to establish a regime in which the *ottimati* had a dominant role. These few plots were the work of discontented former supporters of the regime. In most cases they or their fathers were prominent or leading members of the regime which they sought to overthrow.

Most plots by contrast sought to re-establish the past regime, either the restoration of popular government or the return of the Medici. They were the work of those who had always desired the re-establishment of the past regime. Those involved were mostly from families outside the ruling circles of the regime they were attempting to overthrow. In many cases they or their fathers had been prominent or leading citizens of the past regime which they sought to re-establish, while others shared long-standing bonds of loyalty to the deposed leaders of the past regime. They sought to return to power and to avenge their overthrow and all that they had suffered on account of their opposition to the regime. Almost all plots were the work, to some extent, of those who had always desired the restoration of the past regime, of those who had been thrown out of power and their loyal supporters. Most plots were mainly so.

Political conflict in Florence in the early sixteenth century was thus not the conflict between *ottimati* on the one hand and the Medici or popular government on the other. Rather, it was the conflict between the *ottimati* themselves, as it had been since the two or three decades following the Ciompi revolt of 1378. Moreover, to the extent that most plots sought the re-establishment of the past regime, political conflict in Florence was mostly the conflict between those patricians who supported popular government as it existed under Soderini in 1512 and those patricians who desired a party-based regime with the Medici as party bosses.

This was a conflict between those in power and those they had thrown out of power. Some of the supporters of popular government or the Medici involved in plots after 1494 were descendants of those who had opposed or supported the Medici in 1434 and the decades to follow, and thus in some respects political conflict after 1494 dated back to the earliest years of the Medici regime in the fifteenth century. For the most part however, the conflict after 1494 between supporters of popular government and supporters of the Medici first originated in the last years of the Medici regime in the fifteenth century concerning the increasing predominance of the Medici and particularly of Piero before 1494. It was in 1494 that it first erupted. In the case of those long-standing supporters of the Medici who conspired against the popular government they or their fathers had loyally supported the Medici until their overthrow in 1494 and desired their return ever since. Most of those supporters of popular government involved in plots and other attacks against the Medici after 1512 were men who themselves or whose fathers had been supporters of the Medici but opposed them in 1494, remained implacably opposed to their return until 1512, and sought the restoration of the popular government ever since.

It was the fact that most plots against the Medici after 1512 sought the re-establishment of a broad popular government, rather than the oligarchic one of 1433 sought by opponents of the Medici in 1466 and 1494, that partly distinguished them from plots against the Medici in the fifteenth century. Savonarola had played an important role in the creation of the Great Council in 1494 which was to ensure this difference. However, contrary to recent assertions, it was not the case that followers of Savonarola were at the forefront of opposition to the Medici or that they provided the ideological justification for it. Every plot against the Medici expressed above all the desire for a popular or an aristocratic republic rather than a godly one and very few of those involved in conspiracies against the Medici can be found to have had any *piagnone* sympathies at all. The focus and leadership of opposition to the Medici was provided by supporters of popular government or an aristocratic republic guided by the traditional values of Florentine republicanism and not by followers of Savonarola.

Those who conspired against the Medici sought their inspiration and justification not from Savonarola, but rather from classical sources and the ancient doctrine of tyrannicide, from Aristotle, Livy and the praise of Brutus in Roman literature. Indeed far from providing the justification for opposition to the Medici, most followers of Savonarola believed that tyrannical government was a punishment from God to purge the sins of the *popolo*, and that the Medici should be endured until God saw fit to remove them. This belief was probably the main reason why Savonarolans were not at the forefront of opposition to the Medici. Plots against the Medici were the work of supporters of popular government or an aristocratic republic guided by the traditional values of Florentine republicanism rather than by Savonarola's vision of a godly republic because it was those values and not Savonarola that provided a justification for opposition to the Medici.

The classically inspired belief that it was legitimate and glorious for an individual to attempt to overthrow the government in order to restore liberty to the city or to save it from destruction was instrumental to plots, and every conspiracy depended upon it. To the extent that conspirators against the Medici were ever moved by the desire for glory, as some contemporaries believed they were, the doctrine of tyrannicide played a fundamental role in plots, providing not only their justification but their inspiration. However, there were supporters of republican liberty during the Medici regime, of whom Machiavelli was only one, who counselled against attempts to restore liberty to the city on the grounds that they were bound to do more harm than good, since the chances of success were so slim, and the costs of failure to the city so high. That argument was to hold increasing sway in the decades after 1530, and conspiracy was to become less frequent as a result.

Plots against the Medici after 1512 differed from those against them in the fifteenth century in the fact that they were mostly the work of those thrown out of power and their loyal supporters who had always desired the overthrow of the Medici. Yet there were plots after 1512, in 1522 and 1526/7, by discontented supporters and leading members of the regime. These expressed the desire for a regime in which the *ottimati* were dominant, as plots before 1494 had done, but they

also expressed discontent, in some individuals at least, with the Medici's failure to satisfy the expectations aroused in their supporters by their possession of the Papacy.

Indeed the discontent of those involved in the plot of 1526/7 and other leading supporters and members of the regime who with them were to be at the head of the *Tumulto* could be said to have arisen largely as a result of the elevation of Cardinal Giulio to the Papacy as Clement VII in 1523. For it was this that led to the appointment of Cortona and the Medici bastards and the increase in Medici power after 1523 discontent at which ensured that Capponi, Vettori, the Strozzi, the Salviati and the others involved sought the overthrow of the Medici as soon as Clement's foreign policy was seen to fail. It was Clement's pursuit of the interests of the Papacy at the cost of those of Florence that exposed the city to the danger of the sack, threatened it with financial exhaustion, and drove Capponi and other leading supporters and members of the regime to plot to free the city from Medici control. Plots thus reveal the extent to which in a number of ways the elevation of the Medici to the Papacy, far from bolstering their position in Florence, actually threatened the security of the regime.

Plots against the Medici were always encouraged by popular support for the past regime, by popular discontent on account of the desire for the reopening of the Great Council. All plots against the Medici sought to appeal to that discontent and would not have occurred without it. Plots thus testify to the extent to which the creation of the Great Council and its abolition left the Medici weaker on their return in 1512 than they had been in the fifteenth century. By contrast the most important internal weakness of the popular government after 1494 was the discontent of *ottimati* on account of their desire for a dominant role in the regime. The plot to overthrow Soderini which brought the Medici to city in 1512 was not only the expression of that discontent, it was encouraged by the wider discontent of leading citizens on account of their desire for a Senate, and which contributed at least in part to its success.

For that was the cause of the divisions within the regime which helped to render Soderini and the popular government incapable of proceeding against the conspirators and ensured that their earlier activities in the Rucellai gardens, their public visits to the Medici in Rome, and their involvement in the Strozzi-Medici

marriage alliance went unpunished. Soderini failed to deal ruthlessly with his opponents and “kill the sons of Brutus”, in Machiavelli’s phrase, and that is why he was overthrown. He had been unable as much as unwilling to do so, but his failure was at least in part due to the belief that he would be able to overcome the enmity of those who eventually overthrew him with patience, clemency and rewards.

There was a vast difference between the clemency with which opponents were treated by Soderini and the ruthlessness of the Medici and the popular government of the last republic. That is no better demonstrated than by the way in which each regime dealt with verbal offences against it. Only one individual was condemned for verbal offences in the years from 1502 to 1512, where the Medici regime and the popular government of the last republic condemned on average three individuals a year. Despite its particular reputation for ruthlessness the last republic was no more extreme than the Medici in the regularity with which it condemned verbal offences, but the sentence of execution was more common, and performed in public.

The same idea of political crime was shared by all regimes. Where they differed was in the extent to which the regime itself could agree on whether particular cases of outspokenness, for example, were crimes against it, or indeed crimes at all. Popular governments were divided to an extent that the Medici regime never was, and each side accused the other of crimes against the popular regime and the public welfare, and defended itself from the same accusation. It was never as clear under popular government as it was under the Medici who were the guardians of the *status civitatis*, the condition of the city. Popular government did not know in whose interests it was to rule, whereas the Medicean regime had no such doubt.

The last republic was more able than the popular regime under Soderini to condemn verbal offences not because it was any less divided, but because the balance of power more often, if not always, favoured those who sought to be ruthless. Their desire to condemn verbal offences vigorously was backed up by the belief that the popular government had been overthrown in 1512 as a result of the negligence, faint-heartedness, patience, goodness and respect with which Soderini in particular had treated opponents of the regime. That same belief had informed the calls of partisans

of the Medici for the crushing of their opponents, as well as Machiavelli's famous advice to kill the sons of Brutus. If there was a new emphasis on force in Florentine political thought after 1512 then the desire to avoid the failures of Soderini was a major reason why.

That desire was to have serious consequences during the last republic, for the blanket persecution of former leading members and supporters of the Medici regime that resulted proved a fatal error on two counts. It not only drove them into the arms of the Pope out of necessity, and then to be instrumental in persuading him against abandoning the siege altogether, it did so when in many cases they would not otherwise have even desired the Medici's return. Moreover Guiccardini, Vettori and other leading citizens were driven not only to work for the overthrow of popular government and the return of the Medici, but ultimately for the overthrow of communal government in Florence and the establishment of a Medici duchy.

The Medici regime was more able than popular government to be ruthless towards its opponents and as a result three times as many individuals were condemned for verbal offences in the first three years after the return of the Medici in 1512, than in the three short years of the last republic. But it was able only as long as it was united, and when the Medici regime split apart in the winter of 1526 in the face of the growing Imperialist threat to the city, the young nobles were able to clamour their way towards revolt.

The Medici did seek to conciliate opponents with benefits and rewards, a fatal error according to contemporaries, which led to their overthrow particularly because it resulted in the neglect of their supporters, who were thus neither inclined nor forced to defend the regime. Buondelmonti's leadership of the plot of 1522 however, demonstrates the extent to which the security of the Medici was also threatened by their willingness to favour their most trusted supporters, even to the point of protecting them from the consequences of their transgressions of the law. Moreover, with only a very few exceptions, all those well-known and listed opponents condemned for verbal offences, involved in plots and at the forefront of the *Tumulto* had endured exclusion, persecution and the full force of the fear and hatred of the regime towards them since 1512. To that extent most plots and other



violent attacks against the Medici regime were the result of the failure of the Medici to crush their opponents despite attempts to do so.

Plots demonstrate that the greatest failures of all regimes, however, were diplomatic ones, and their greatest weakness the military incapacity of the city in the face of the new foreign powers in Italy after 1494. For plots depended above all else on foreign support, and thus it was above all else the failure of regimes to prevent an external military threat that provided the opportunity to attempt to overthrow the regime. Plots were less frequent after 1494 than they had been a hundred years earlier because regimes were stronger and opponents weaker than they had been, and thus plots were more dependant on outside help. The domination of Italy after 1494 by only two great powers meant that there were also fewer opportunities to obtain essential foreign support than there had been in the early fifteenth century. Nevertheless the Italian Wars ensured that there were more opportunities to gain outside help than there had been in the Laurentian era, when the Italian political scene had been more stable, and plots were more frequent after 1494 as a result.

The dependence of conspiracy on foreign support reveals the weakness of opponents to both the Medici and popular government, and their inability to overthrow the regime without outside help. The security of all regimes, whatever their popularity, was to depend in the end on their ability to secure the city from external military threat. It was above all the overwhelming presence of the Spanish army that explains the equal facility with which both Soderini was overthrown and the *parlamento* forced in 1512, and it was above all the lack of outside help that explains the failure of the *Tumulto* in 1527. Plots were testament to the diplomatic errors of the regime, and their success the result of its military collapse. Plots thus provide dramatic evidence of how much the instability of Florentine politics after 1494 was the result of the instability of the Italian political scene after 1494, of the conflicts between the Pope, France and Spain, and the historical military weakness that made Florence so prey to them.

## Appendices

## Appendix A

### The Political and Social Background of Opponents 1494-1530

#### GUIDE TO APPENDIX A.

##### 1. LAYOUT.

The information in Appendix A has been arranged as follows:

NAME OF OPPONENT	Political Career
Date of Birth. Guild Membership/Antiquity of Family	
Name of Opponent's Father	Political Career of Opponent's Father

2. NAMES. The preposition 'di' has been omitted to save space.

##### 3. POLITICAL OFFICE.

- a) Only important political office held within the city has been listed. Positions as ambassadors, orators, commissioners and offices in the Florentine dominion have been omitted.
- b) Political office held only after 1455 has been listed.
- c) For the *Consulte e Pratiche*, only the years from 1498 to 1512 have been included.

4. SOURCES. The main sources are listed at the end of the Appendix, others have been given in the footnotes.

5. ABBREVIATIONS. The following abbreviations have been used:

A	<i>Accoppiatori</i>
Amico( )	On Lists of Supporters of the Medici regime (Date of Lists)
B	<i>Balia</i>
CP( )	<i>Consulte e Pratiche</i> (Years in which individuals spoke in <i>pratiche</i> on their own behalf)
G	Gonfalonier of Justice

HP	<i>Uomini di pratica</i>
M( )	Major guilds (Date of family's first Prior)
m	Minor guilds
Mg	Magnate family
MP	Officials of the <i>Monte di Pietà</i>
Mt	Officials of the <i>Monte</i>
Nemico( )	On Lists of Opponents of the Medici regime (Date of Lists)
OP	<i>Otto di Pratica</i>
PG	Captains of the Guelf Party
Sig	Priors in the <i>Signoria</i>
VIII	<i>Otto di Guardia</i>
IX	Nine of the Militia
X	<i>Dieci di Balìa</i>
XII	Twelve Good Men
XVI	Sixteen Gonfaloniers of the Companies
12	Twelve Procurators
17	Seventeen Reformers
20(Sept. 1512)	Those appointed to advise the <i>Signoria</i> on constitutional reform, 1 September 1512
20(May 1527)	Those elected to regulate the re-establishment of popular government, 27 May 1527
70	Council of Seventy
70(1480+)	Those co-opted to the Council of Seventy from 1480 to 1494

APPENDIX A, i.

**The Conspiracy of 1497**

MESSER BERNARDO ACCOLTI

b. 1458.<sup>1</sup> M(No Priors)<sup>2</sup>

Messer Benedetto Messer Michele d. 1464.  
Accolti

LORENZO MESSER PIERO ALAMANNI

b. 1466. M(1354)

MESSER PIERO

FRANCESCO ALAMANNI

b. 1434.

Sig(1465, 72, 80, 84) G(1490, 1513) X(1510, 13)  
A(1492, 1512) OP(1490, 93, 1514, 15, 16, 17, 18)  
17(1490,1514) VIII(1483) Mt(1493, 1515) B(1512) 70(1480+,  
1514) 12(1514, 15, 17)

Francesco Piero Alamanni

FILIPPO DELL' ANTELLA

b. 1449. M(1282)

Giovanni Taddeo dell' Antella

Sig(1483, 1522, 25) G(Jan. 1494, 1518) XVI(1503, 06)  
XII(1504) VIII(1482, 93) CP(1505-1509) X(1503, Dec. 1512)  
70(1480+, 1514) B(1512) OP(1514)  
Sig(1473, 80) G(1467, 77) VIII(1458, 68, 79) Mt(1476)  
70(1480) A(1470) OP(1481)

LIONARDO BARTOLINI

b. 1464. M(1362)

Zanobi Zanobi Bartolini

G(1516) B(1512) 70(1514)

SFORZA BETTINI

m<sup>3</sup>

Ser Antonio Bettino Bettini

LUIGI PIERO BINI

M(1352)

Political background unknown

GIOVANNI CAMBI

b. 1454. M(1437)

Bernardo Giovanni Cambi

Sig(1455, 69) XVI(1461) XII(1459, 63, 75) Mt(1479)

GINO CAPPONI

b. 1453. M(1287)

Lodovico Agostino Capponi

Sig(1479)

<sup>1</sup> L. Mantovini, 'Benardo Accolti', *D.B.I.*, i, pp. 103-4.

<sup>2</sup> Accolti's father was granted Florentine citizenship in 1459, R. Black, *Benedetto Accolti and the Florentine Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 330.

<sup>3</sup> The members of the Bettini family in the Great Council in 1496 were all members of the minor guilds, Guidi, *Lotte*, pp. 537-539.

FRANCESCO CEGIA b. 1460. m Agostino Domenico Cegia	Sig(1474) XII(1481) d. 1482. <sup>4</sup>
TOMMASO CORBINELLI b. 1457. M(1286) PANDOLFO CORBINELLI b. 1449.	Sig(1486, 94) G(1513) VIII(1482, 14, 22) X(1513) B(1512) OP(1515, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23) 12(1514, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22) 70(1514) 17(1514) A(1512)
Bernardo Tommaso Corbinelli	Sig(1475) G(1460, 81) XVI(1460) VIII(1460, 66, 72, 77) X(1467, 79) Mt(1476) 70(1480) OP(1481) A(1468)
FANTONE FANTONI b. 1464. m Bernardo Antonio Fantoni	Sig(1519) VIII(1521)  Sig(1475)
AGNOLO FORTINI M(1386) Guaspere Ser Agnolo Fortini	Sig(Mar. 94) XVI(1487)
JACOPO GIANFIGLIAZZI b. 1470. Mg  Messer Bongianni Bongianni Gianfigliuzzi	Sig(1510, 17) G(1514, 21) XVI(1513, 15) XII(1507) VIII(1511) B(19 Sept. 1512) X(1513) 70(1514) 17(1514) Mt(1519) A(1512) PG(1513, 14, 15) OP(1515, 16, 17, 20, 21, 24) Sig(1472, 80) G(1467, 70) XII(1475, 83) Mt(1470, 78) X(1467, 78) 70(1480) OP(1480) A(1469) 17(1481) VIII(1463, 67, 69, 73, 77)
CARLO GHERARDI b. 1458. M(1352) Orlando Bartolomeo Gherardi	Sig(1490) XVI(1516)  Sig(1457, 68) G(1464) XII(1474) VIII(1460, 66, 70) 70(1480)
FRANCESCO MARTELLI b. 1456. M(1343) <sup>5</sup> Roberto Niccolò Martelli	Sig(1492, 1520, Mar. 1527) G(1516) VIII(1491, 16) B(19 Sept. 1512) 70(1516) OP(1524)
ANDREA DE' MEDICI b. 1448. M(1291) Bernardo Andrea de' Medici	VIII(1483)
FRANCESCO DOMENICO NALDINI M(1389)	Political background unknown

<sup>4</sup> R. Ristori, 'Francesco Cegia', *D.B.I.*, xxiii, p. 324.

<sup>5</sup> The first Priors for the Martelli were for the minor guilds, but the family had Priors for the major guilds before 1434, Pesman Cooper, 'Florentine Ruling Group', p. 139.

BERNARDO DEL NERO b. 1426. M(1382) <sup>6</sup>	Sig(1478, 84) G(1475, 87, Mar. 1497) XII(1483) VIII(1472, 78, 81, 88) Mt(1462) 17(1490) X(1468, 96) 70(1480) OP(1480, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94) A(1465, 76, 91, 94)
Nero Filippo del Nero	
PIERO PITTI b. 1448. M(1283) Messer Luca Buonaccorso Pitti	G(1458) A(1455, 58, 66)
GIANNOZZO PUCCI b. 1460. M(1396) <sup>7</sup> Antonio Puccio Pucci	VIII(1492)  Sig(1458, 76) G(1463, 81) XVI(1470) XII(1478) X(1456) VIII(1466, 72, 76, 82) 70(1480) OP(1480, 81) A(1471, 74) 17(1481) d. 1484. <sup>8</sup>
NICCOLÒ RIDOLFI b. 1445. M(1321) Luigi Messer Lorenzo Ridolfi	G(1489) XII(1477) VIII(1479, 93) 70(1480+) Mt(1491) 17(1490) A(1490, 93) OP(1486, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94) A(1455, 58) XII(1459)
LUCREZIA SALVIATI	Daughter of Lorenzo the Magnificent.
GALEAZZO SASSETTI b. 1461. M(1453) Francesco Tommaso Sassetti	Sig(1513) d. 1513. <sup>9</sup>  Sig(1469) XVI(1484)
LUCA SPERANZINI	From Camiamo. <sup>10</sup>
LORENZO TORNABUONI b. 1468. Mg Giovanni Francesco Tornabuoni	G(1482) 70(1480+) d. 1497. <sup>11</sup>
NOFRI TORNABUONI b. 1451. Mg Niccolò Francesco Tornabuoni	XVI(1485)  Sig(1460) G(1468) VIII(1462, 70) A(1472)
MESSER LUIGI TORNABUONI Mg	
PIERO TORNABUONI	G(1514) 20(Sept. 1512) B(1512) 70(1514)
Filippo Filippo Tornabuoni	Sig(1464) G(1476) XVI(1461)

<sup>6</sup> Del Nero had been a member of the minor guilds.

<sup>7</sup> Pucci's grandfather was in the minor guilds, and the family's first prior for the major guilds was after 1434. See Rubinstein, *Government*, p. 256; Pesman Cooper, 'Florentine Ruling Group', p. 141.

<sup>8</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 158 (Pucci), tav. v.

<sup>9</sup> B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 191 (Sassetti), f. 5<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 109. His condemnation describes him simply as 'de Florentia'.

<sup>11</sup> Roover, *Rise*, p. 261.

APPENDIX A, ii.

**The Conspiracy of 1510**

PRINZIVALLE DELLA STUFA

b. 1484. M(1328)

Messer Luigi Messer Agnolo  
della Stufa

Sig(1526) VIII(1523) PG(1523)

Sig(1484) G(1515) XVI(1485, 97) XII(1486, 93)

VIII(1502, Sept. 1512) X(1498, 05, 06, 13) CP(1498-1509)

B(1512) 70(1514) OP(1515, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25)

12(1513) 17(1514) A(1512, 13, 22, 24, 25, 26)

Amico(1513, 1518<sup>b</sup>)

APPENDIX A, iii.

**The Overthrow of Soderini, August 1512**

ANTONFRANCESCO  
DEGLI ALBIZZI

b. 1487. M(1282)

Luca Antonio degli Albizzi

VIII(1513) X(1528) B(1527)

Sig(1490, 98) XVI(1497) VIII(1488, 97, 01) X(1499)  
CP(1498-1500) d. 1502.<sup>12</sup>

GIROLAMO DEGLI ALBIZZI

b. 1485. M(1282)

GIOVANNI DEGLI ALBIZZI

b. 1479.

MASO DEGLI ALBIZZI

b. 1478.

Luca Maso degli Albizzi

Sig(1525) VIII(1516)

Sig(1514, 21) VIII(1514)

Sig(1484, 92) G(1501, 15) XVI(1483, 05) VIII(1485, 00, 14)  
IX(1509) Mt(Mar. 1494, 1519) X(1500, 02, 04, 13)  
CP(1498-1512) 20(Sept. 1512) B(1512) 70(1480+, 1514)  
OP(1515, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25) 12(1512) 17(1514)  
A(1512) Amico(1513, 1518<sup>b,c</sup>)

MATTEO BARTOLI

b. 1474. M(1345)

COSIMO BARTOLI

b. 1484.

Cosimo Matteo Bartoli

Sig(1515, 19) VIII(1515) B(1522) 70(1524)

Sig(1517, 26) XVI(1522, 25) VIII(Jan. 1527)

Sig(1467, 78) G(1481) VIII(1472) 17(1481) Mt(1483)

BENEDETTO BUONDELMONTI

b. 1481. Mg

Filippo Lorenzo Buondelmonti

Sig(1523) XII(1511) VIII(1513) 70(1524) 12(1525)

Sig(1500) G(Nov. 1512) XVI(1484) XII(Dec. 1494) IX(1508)  
X(1495) 20(Sept. 1512) B(1512) 70(1514) VIII(1521) 17(1514)  
12(1512) A(1512) OP(1514, 15, 16, 18) Amico(1513, 18<sup>b</sup>)

<sup>12</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, dispp. 178-80 (Albizzi), tav. xix.



GINO CAPPONI b. 1478. M(1287) Neri Gino Capponi	XII(1511) d. 1516. <sup>13</sup>  Sig(1490, 1509) XVI(1488) XII(1491) VIII(1509) X(1509) B(1512) 70(1514)
DOMENICO RUCELLAI b. 1486. FRANCESCO RUCELLAI b. 1485. M(1302) Girolamo Filippo Rucellai	XII(1519)  Sig(1523) XVI(1515) VIII(1524)  Sig(1488, 95) XVI(1490, 98) VIII(1499) PG(1504) CP(1499)
GIOVANNI RUCELLAI b. 1475. M(1302) PALLA RUCELLAI b. 1473. Bernardo Giovanni Rucellai	d. 1525. <sup>14</sup>  Sig(1516, 25) G(1520) VIII(1517) B(1524) 70(1515) OP(1520, 23, 26) A(1525) G(1480) OP(1487, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93) X(1497, 99, 13) CP(1498-1502) 17(1490) A(1478, 90, Dec. 94, 1512) 20(Sept. 1512) B(1512) 12(1513) 70(1480+, 1514) Amico(1513)
SIMONE TORNABUONI b. 1472. Mg Filippo Francesco Tornabuoni	Sig(1523)  Sig(1465) G(1476) 70(1481)
BARTOLOMEO VALORI b. 1476. M(1322) Filippo Bartolomeo Valori	Sig(1508, 21) G(1524) XVI(1513) Mt(1508) VIII(1509, 22) 70(1519) OP(1522, 25) 12(1520, 22, 23, 26) Sig(1485) XVI(1483, 89) XII(1486, 90) VIII(1487) 17(1490) Mt(1491, 92) d. 1494. <sup>15</sup>
GIOVANNI VESPUCCI b. 1476. M(1350) <sup>17</sup> Messer Guidantonio Giovanni Vespucci	d. 1517. <sup>16</sup>  Sig(1468, 73, 91) G(1487, 98) VIII(1471) 70(1481+) OP(1487, 88, 90, 91) X(1496, 99) A(Dec. 1494) Mt(1497) CP(1498-1500) d. 1501. <sup>18</sup>
PAOLO VETTORI b. 1477. M(1320) Piero Francesco Vettori	Sig(1507, Nov. 12, 23) XII(1508) VIII(1513) 70(1524)  Sig(1476, 80) VIII(1486) X(1478, Dec. 94) 70(1481+) d. 1496. <sup>19</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., disp. 165 (Capponi), tav. xx.

<sup>14</sup> Passerini, *Rucellai*, p. 139.

<sup>15</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 17 (Valori), tav. ii.

<sup>16</sup> B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 192 (Vespucci).

<sup>17</sup> The first Priors of the Vespucci were for the minor guilds, but the family had Priors for the major guilds before 1434, Pesman Cooper, 'Florentine Ruling Group', p. 145.

<sup>18</sup> Guidi, *1494*, p. 191.

<sup>19</sup> Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. 5.

APPENDIX A, iv.

**The Parlamento of September 1512**

GIROLAMO DEGLI ALBIZZI

b. 1485. M(1282)

Luca Maso degli Albizzi

Sig(1484, 92) G(1501, 15) XVI(1483, 05) VIII(1485, 00, 14)  
IX(1509) Mt(Mar. 1494, 1519) X(1500, 02, 04, 13) B(1512)  
CP(1498-1512) 20(Sept. 1512) 70(1480+, 1514) 12(1512)  
17(1514) A(1512) OP(1515, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25)  
Amico(1513, 1518<sup>b,c</sup>)

FRANCESCO ALTOVITI

b. 1479. M(1282)

Guglielmo Bardo Altoviti

Sig(1525) XVI(1522) XII(1524) B(1524) Otr(1522,

Sig(1481) XVI(1497) VIII(1486) PG(1504) CP(1498-1504)  
d. 1511.<sup>20</sup>

MATTEO BARTOLI

b. 1474. M(1345)

COSIMO BARTOLI

b. 1484.

Cosimo Matteo Bartoli

Sig(1515, 19) VIII(1515) B(1522) 70(1524)

Sig(1517, 26) XVI(1522, 25) VIII(Jan. 1527)

Sig(1467, 78) G(1481) VIII(1472) 17(1481) Mt(1483)

PANDOLFO BARTOLINI

b. 1476. M(1362)

Bernardo Lionardo Bartolini

G(1521) XVI(1516) VIII(1522)

Sig.(1472) G(1490) XII(1473, 81) VIII(1483) B(1480)  
17(1490)

PIERO BARTOLINI

b. 1480. M(1362)

Marco Lionardo Bartolini

Sig(1525) XVI(1514, Jan. 1527)

ROBERTO DEL BECCUTO

b. 1476. M(1283)

Messer Felice Deo del Beccuto

Sig(1517, 25) XVI(1519) XII(1521, 26) VIII(1518) B(1524)

Sig(1463) XVI(1457, 67) XII(1456, 60, 72, 92) VIII(1457, 81)

ALESSANDRO BONI

b. 1473. M(1442)

Antonio Bono Boni

Sig(1469)

GIOVANBATTISTA BONI

Could be one of three individuals.<sup>21</sup>

JACOPO BOTTEGARI

b. 1476. (m)

Francesco Ser Jacopo Bottegari

XVI(1490)

<sup>20</sup> L. Passerini, *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Altoviti* (Florence, 1871), p. 164.

<sup>21</sup> Antonio, Lionardo and Francesco Boni all had sons called Giovanbattista alive in 1512, born in 1472, 1467 and 1483 respectively. A.S.F., Tratte, 419, f. 49<sup>v</sup>; *Ibid.*, 88, f. 325<sup>f</sup>; *Ibid.*, 86, f. 265<sup>f</sup>.

BACCIO CINI b. 1456. m Simone Matteo Cini	Sig(1491) XVI(1492) XVI(1513)
GIOVANNI DAVANZATI b. 1460. M(1320) Niccolò Giovanni Davanzati	Sig(May 1494) XVI(1505) Sig(1465) XII(1477)
GIOVANFRANCESCO LUIGI FORTINI M(1386)	Political background unknown. <sup>22</sup>
ANTONIO LAPI M(1374) <sup>23</sup> Piero Salvestro Lapi	Sig(1479) XVI(1496) VIII(1480) Amico(1513)
GIOVANNI MARUCELLI m. <sup>25</sup>	Could be one of two individuals. <sup>24</sup>
BERNARDO DE' MEDICI b. 1476. M(1291) MALATESTA DE' MEDICI b. 1487. Antonio Giuliano de' Medici	d. c.1517 <sup>26</sup>
PAOLO DE' MEDICI b. 1467. M(1291) Piero Messer Orlando de Medici	Sig(1517, 26) G(1519) XVI(1514) XII(1521) VIII(1513) B(1516) 70(1519) OP(1520, 25) G(1473) VIII(1481)
DOMENICO MARTELLI b. 1486. M(1343) Braccio Messer Domenico Martelli	Sig(1474) G(1489) XII(1492) A(Dec. 1494) CP(1498-1500) d. c.1500. <sup>27</sup>
FILIPPO RICASOLI b. 1480. Mg Piergiovanni Andrea Ricasoli	Sig(1493, 1501) VIII(1495) X(1495) CP(1498-1500) d. 1510. <sup>28</sup>
COSIMO RUCELLAI b. 1495. M(1302) Cosimo Bernardo Rucellai	d. 1520 d. 1495 <sup>29</sup>

<sup>22</sup> There is no evidence that a Giovanfrancesco di Luigi Fortini existed, although a Giovanfrancesco di Guaspere di Ser Agnolo Fortini, alive in 1512, is recorded to have been born in 1460. A.S.F., Tratte, 86, f. 274<sup>v</sup>; Ibid., 88, f. 321<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> Lapi's grandfather moved from the minor to the major guilds between 1434 and 1452, Rubinstein, *Government*, pp. 253, 274.

<sup>24</sup> Both Gherardo and Giuliano Marucelli had sons called Giovanni alive in 1512, born in 1471 and 1482 respectively. A.S.F., Tratte, 419, f. 49<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> The Marucelli in the Great Council in 1496 and 1508 were all members of the minor guilds, Guidi, *Lotte*, pp. 537-539.

<sup>26</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 23 (Medici), tav. xvii.

<sup>27</sup> Cerretani, *Ricordi*, p. 137.

<sup>28</sup> L. Passerini, *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Ricasoli* (Florence, 1861), p. 158.

<sup>29</sup> Idem, *Rucellai*, p. 145.

GIOVANNI RUCELLAI b. 1475. M(1302) PALLA RUCELLAI b. 1473. Bernardo Giovanni Rucellai	d. 1525  Sig(1516, 25) G(1520) VIII(1517) B(1514) 70(1515) OP(1520, 23, 26) G(1480) OP(1487, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93) X(1497, 99, 13) 17(1490)CP(1498-1502) A(1478, 90, Dec.94, 1512) 70(1480+,1514) 20(1 Sept.1512) B(1512) 12(1513) Amico(1513)
GIOVANNI RUCELLAI b. 1489. M(1302) Antonio Giovanni Rucellai	Sig(1506) XVI(1505) d. 1521. <sup>30</sup>
PIERO RUCELLAI b. 1467. M(1302) Niccolò Piero Rucellai	VIII(1524)  d. c.1508. <sup>31</sup>
PIERO RUCELLAI b. 1475. M(1302) Francesco Bernardo Rucellai	Sig(1518) G(1526) VIII(Sept.1512) B(1522) 70(1524)  Sig(1482) VIII(1486) d. 1490. <sup>32</sup>
GIOVANFILIPPO SALVETTI b. 1464. M(1436) Piero Messer Tommaso Salvetti	XII(1506, 17) PG(1511) XVI(1526)  Sig(1475) XVI(1476) XII(1470, 79, 85)
FRANCESCO SALVIATI b. 1481. M(1297) Giuliano Francesco Salviati	Sig(1478) G(1493, 98) VIII(1482) 70(1480+) OP(1493) 17(1490) A(1492, Dec. 1494) PG(1495, 04) CP(1498-1504) X(1496, 98, 00, 02) B(1512) d. 1512. <sup>33</sup>
CRISTOFANO SERNIGI b. 1479. M(1390) Chimenti Cipriano Sernigi	Sig(1514) XVI(1510, 15, 22) XII(1513) VIII(1517) B(1522)  Sig(1481, 90, 94, 1502) G(1515) XVI(1478, 93) XII(1496, 1516)VIII(1485, 1507, 14) IX(1507) CP(1498-1512) X(1497, 99, 1500, 03, 05, Oct. 1512) B(1512) 70(1514) Amico(1513)
PRINZIVALLE DELLA STUFA b. 1484. M(1328) Messer Luigi Messer Agnolo della Stufa	Sig(1526) VIII(1523) PG(1523) Sig(1484) G(1515) XVI(1485, 97) XII(1486, 93) VIII(1502, Sept. 1512) X(1498, 05, 06, 13) CP(1498-1509) B(1512) 70(1514) OP(1515, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25) 12(1513) 17(1514) A(1512, 13, 22, 24, 25, 26) Amico(1513, 1518 <sup>b</sup> )
AGNOLO TORNABUONI b. 1475. Mg Giovansimone Filippo Tornabuoni	Sig(1517) XVI(1509) XII(1522) VIII(1515) B(1524)  Sig(1471) VIII(1479)

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>33</sup> Hurtubise, *Salviati*, p. 59.

GIORGIO TORNABUONI

b. 1479. Mg

Piero Filippo Tornabuoni

G(1514) 20(Sept. 1512) B(1512) 70(1514)

GIROLAMO TORNABUONI

b. 1449. Mg

Marabotto Francesco Tornabuoni

Sig(1489, 18) VIII(1494, 1513) XII(1514) CP(1502-1503)

## APPENDIX A, v.

### The Conspiracy of 1513

PIETROPAOLO BOSCOLI

b. 1481. Mg<sup>34</sup>

Giachinotto Francesco Boscoli

Nemico(1513)

AGOSTINO CAPPONI

b. 1471. M(1287)

Bernardo Agostino Capponi

Nemico(1513)

GIOVANNI FOLCHI

b. 1475. M(1463)<sup>36</sup>

Simone Giovanni Folchi

Nemico(1513, 1517<sup>b,c</sup>) d. 1518.<sup>35</sup>

Sig(1484) XII(1478) XVI(1492)

ARCHBISHOP COSIMO DE' PAZZI

b. 1464. Mg

Guglielmo Antonio de' Pazzi

Sig(1467) G(1513) A(Dec. 1494, 1513) X(1513) VIII(1469)  
Mt(1472) B(1512) 70(1514) CP(1498-1512) 20(Sept. 1512)  
Amico(1513)

NICCOLÒ VALORI

b. 1464. M(1322)

Bartolomeo Filippo Valori

Sig(1502, 06, 11) XII(1497, 1500) XVI(1501) VIII(1494, 99)  
X(1506, 08) IX(1510) CP(1500-1509) Nemico(1517<sup>b,c</sup>, 18<sup>a,b</sup>)  
Sig(1470) XVI(1467) VIII(1470) Mt(1474)

<sup>34</sup> E. Grasselini and A. Fracassini, *Firenze. Famiglie minori* (Florence, 1984), p 22.

<sup>35</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 5.

<sup>36</sup> Mecatti, *Storia*, p. 323.

**The Conspiracy of 1522**

LUIGI ALAMANNI

b. 1495. M(1354)

Messer Piero Francesco Alamanni Sig(1465, 72, 80, 84) G(1490, 1513) X(1510, 13) A(1492, 1512) OP(1490, 93, 1514, 15, 16, 17, 18) 17(1490, 1514) VIII(1483) Mt(1493, 1515) B(1512) 70(1480+, 1514) 12(1514, 15, 17) Amico(1513) d. 1519.<sup>37</sup>

LUIGI ALAMANNI

b. 1494. M(1454)

Tommaso Andrea Alamanni

ANTONIO FRANCESCO BRUCIOLI From the parish of San Niccolò

b. 1487.<sup>38</sup>

ZANOBI BUONDELMONTI

b. 1491. Mg

Bartolomeo Rosso Buondelmonti Sig(1495) XVI(1485) d. 1515.<sup>39</sup>

JACOPO DA DIACCETO

b. 1494. Mg

Giovannbattista Lapo da Diacceto XII(1501) d. 1527.<sup>40</sup>

NICCOLÒ MARTELLI

b. 1498. M(1343)

Lorenzo Niccolò Martelli XVI(1514) PG(1506) X(1529) Nemico(1517<sup>c</sup>) Dubio(1518)

ALESSANDRO MONALDI

M(1283)

Tommaso Monaldi

Political background unknown

BATTISTA DELLA PALLA

b. 1489. M(1478)

Marco Mariotto della Palla

Sig(1521) XII(1519) XVI(1529)

Sig(1490)

TOMMASO SODERINI

b. 1493. M(1283)

Messer Giovanvettorio Messer

Tommaso Soderini

Sig(1490, 96) XVI(1508) X(1504, 06, 08, Nov. 1527)

CP(1498-1509) Nemico(1517<sup>a</sup>)

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<sup>37</sup> Hauvette, *Luigi Alamanni*, p. 6.

<sup>38</sup> Brucioli, *Dialogi*, p. 553.

<sup>39</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 124 (Buondelmonti), tav. xi.

<sup>40</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 337.

TOMMASO SODERINI b. 1470. M(1283) PIERO SODERINI b. 1493.	Mt(1510, 28) 20(May 1527) X(21 May 1527) HP(1528, 29) Nemico(1517 <sup>a</sup> )
GIOVANBATTISTA SODERINI b. 1484. BISHOP GIULIANO SODERINI b. 1491. Paolantonio Messer Tommaso Soderini	Mt(1513) HP(1528) Sig(1486) G(1497) XVI(1492) 70(1480+) OP(1491, 92, 93, 94) X(Dec. 1494, 95, 98) A(1491) 17(1490) CP(1498-1500) Mt(1487, 88, 89, 90, 99)
PIERO SODERINI b. 1452. M(1283) CARDINAL FRANCESCO SODERINI b. 1453. Messer Tommaso Messer Lorenzo Soderini	Gonfalonier for life 1502-1512. G(1460) A(1455, 58, 73) 70(1480) OP(1480, 82)
BERNARDO DA VERRAZZANO b. 1477. M(1319) Pierandrea Bernardo da Verrazzano	Nemico(1518 <sup>a</sup> )

#### APPENDIX A, vii.

### The Conspiracy of February 1527

MESSER BALDASSARE CARDUCCI b. 1456. M(1380) Baldassare Niccolò Carducci	Sig(1502) CP(1502-09) 20(May 1527) X(1528) Nemico(1517 <sup>a,b,c</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) Sig(1455)
PIERADOVARDO GIACHINOTTI b. 1482. Mg Girolamo Adovardo Giachinotti	Sig(1511, 29) HP(1529) Nemico(1517 <sup>b,c</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) Sig(1474, 95)
LODOVICO DE' NOBILI b. 1480. M(1355) Giovanni Roberto de' Nobili	IX(Jun. 1527) Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>a,b,c</sup> , 1518 <sup>a,b</sup> ) Mt(1497)
BARTOLOMEO PESCONI b. 1470. M(1368) Antonio Michele Pescioni	Sig(Jan. 1512) Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>a,b,c</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) XVI(1470, 78) XII(1472)
GIOVANBATTISTA PITTI b. 1482. M(1283) Bastiano Messer Giovannozzo Pitti	Nemico(1517 <sup>c</sup> ) Sig(1503) XVI(1501)

GIOVANBATTISTA SODERINI b. 1484. M(1283) Paolantonio Messer Tommaso Soderini	Mt(1512) HP(1528)  Sig(1486) G(1497) XVI(1492) 70(1480+) OP(1491, 92, 93, 94) X(Dec.1494, 95, 98) A(1491) 17(1490) CP(1498-1500) Mt(1487, 88, 89, 90, 99)
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APPENDIX A, viii.

**The Conspiracy of 1526/7**

NICCOLÒ CAPPONI b. 1473. M(1287)  Piero Gino Capponi	Sig(1502) G(1526, 27- 29) 70(1522) OP(1524) B(1524) 12(1523, 25, 26) 20(May 1527) X(21 May 1527) Nemico(1517 <sup>a</sup> ) Dubio(1518) Sig(1483, 93) 70(1481+) 20(Dec. 1494)
LORENZO STROZZI b. 1482. M(1283) FILIPPO STROZZI b. 1488. Filippo Matteo Strozzi	Sig(1521) VIII(1515) Mt(1514, 22) B(1522) HP(1529, 30) Amico(1518 <sup>a,b</sup> ) Mt(1515, 16, 18, 19) Amico(1513, 1517, 1518 <sup>a,b</sup> )  Sig(1485)
MATTEO STROZZI b. 1471. M(1283)  Lorenzo Matteo Strozzi	Sig(1513, 26) G(1519) XVI(1511) VIII(1514) Mt(1505, 15, 20) B(1514) 70(1514) OP(1515, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 25) X(1528) A(1522) 12(1515, 17, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26) HP(1528) Amico(1513, 1518 <sup>a,b</sup> )
FRANCESCO VETTORI b. 1474. M(1320)  Piero Francesco Vettori	Sig(1509, 20, 24) G(1521) VIII(1504, Sept. 1512, 18, 23) PG(1509) XII(1504) CP(1512) B(1512) 70(1514) 12(1518, 23, 25, 27) OP(1515, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26) A(1523) Amico (1513, 1518 <sup>a,b</sup> ) Sig(1476, 80) VIII(1486) X(1478, Dec. 94) 70(1481+)

APPENDIX A, ix.

**The Young Nobles 1526/7**

GIOVANFRANCESCO ANTINORI M(1351) Raffaello Tommaso Antinori	Sig(1508)
GIOVANBATTISTA DEL BENE b. 1492. M(1283) Tommaso Antonio del Bene	Nemico(1517 <sup>a</sup> )  Sig(1495) XVI(1497, 1501, 05) XII(1505) VIII(1496) PG(1495) Mt(1498, 99,1500) CP(1498-1505) Nemico(1517 <sup>a</sup> , 1518 <sup>a</sup> )



ANTONIO BERARDI

b. 1500.<sup>41</sup> M(1363)

Giovanni Corrado Berardi

Sig(1489, 99) G (1502, 13) XII(1513) XVI(1503) VIII(1499)  
IX(1507, 09, 11) X(1501, 03, 04) MP(1512) CP(1500-1509)  
70(1514) Amico(1513) d. 1515.<sup>42</sup>

DANTE DA CASTIGLIONE

b. 1503. Mg

Guido Dante da Castiglione

Sig(1498, Aug. 1527) Nemico(1518<sup>a</sup>)

GIOVANBATTISTA GIACOMINI

b. 1507. Mg

Lorenzo Jacopo Giacomini

XII(1503) Sig(1528) XVI(1527)

GIULIANO GONDI

b. 1504. M(1438)

Giovanbattista Giuliano Gondi

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI

b. 1499. M(1283)

Giovanni Gherardo Machiavelli

XVI(1509) Sig(1504, 28) X(1529) Nemico(1518<sup>b</sup>)

ALAMANNO DE' PAZZI

b. 1501. Mg

Antonio Geri de' Pazzi

XVI(1508, 30)

PIERO SALVIATI

b. 1504. M(1297)

Alamanno Averardo Salviati

Sig(1494, 1502) X(1503, 05, 06, 08) Mt(1495, 1505) IX(1507)  
CP(1498-1509) d. 1510.<sup>43</sup>

GIULIANO SALVIATI

b. 1507. M(1297)

Francesco Giuliano Salviati

Amico(1513)

#### APPENDIX A, x.

#### **Those in the room of the Gonfalonier directing the *Tumulto del Venerdì***

GIOVANNI DEGLI ALBERTI

b. 1477. M(1289)

Albertaccio Daniello degli Alberti

Sig(1511, 23) XVI(1513) XII(1508) PG(1509, 27) VIII(1515)  
70(1522) Amico(1517, 1518<sup>a,b</sup>)

MAINARDO CAVALCANTI

b. 1471. Mg

Bartolomeo Mainardo Cavalcanti

Sig(1509) PG(Sept. 1512) Amico(1513) Dubio(1518)

Political career unknown

<sup>41</sup> B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 186, (Berardi) f. 1<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> Butters, *Governors*, p. 230.

<sup>43</sup> Hurtubise, *Salviati*, p. 61.

AGOSTINO DINI b. 1463. M(1370) Francesco Piero Dini	Sig(1497, 1529) G(1523) XVI(1495) VIII(1497, 1521) 70(1522) OP(1526) 12(1523) X(1528) Dubio(1518) Sig(1485) G(1468, 90) XII(1487, 93) VIII(1463, 71, 79) Mt(1464) X(1468, 79) 70(1480) 17(1480, 90) A(1478, 89, 93) OP(1481, 86, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93)
JACOPO GIANFIGLIAZZI b. 1470. Mg  Messer Bongiani Bongiani Gianfigliuzzi	Sig(1510, 17) G(1514, 21) XVI(1513, 15) XII(1507) VIII(1511) B(19 Sept. 1512) X(1513) 70(1514) 17(1514) Mt(1519) A(1512) PG(1513, 14, 15) OP(1515, 16, 17, 20, 21, 24) Amico(1513, 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) Sig(1472, 80) G(1467, 70) XII(1475, 83) VIII(1463, 67, 69, 73, 77)X(1467, 78) 70(1480) OP(1480) Mt(1470, 78) A(1469) 17(1481)
FRANCESCO MARTELLI b. 1456. M(1343)  Roberto Niccolò Martelli	Sig(1492, 1520, Mar. 1527) VIII(1491, 1516) G(1516) B(19 Sept. 1512) 70(1516) OP(1524) Amico(1513, 1517, 1518 <sup>a,b</sup> )
GIOVANNI PERUZZI b. 1463. M(1283) Antonio Giovanni Peruzzi	Sig(1499, Sept. 1527) XVI(1504) XII(1498) 20(May 1527) VIII(1511, 18 May 1527) Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>b,c</sup> , 1518 <sup>a,b</sup> )
AVERARDO SALVIATI b. 1489. M(1297) Alamanno Averardo Salviati	Sig(1520, '25) B(1522)  Sig(1494, 1502) X(1503, 05, 06, 08) Mt(1495, 1505) IX(1507) CP(1498-1509)
ALESSANDRO SEGNI b. 1469. M(1347) Piero Mariotto Segni	Sig(1504) XII(1518) X(1529) HP(May 1529)  Sig(1469, 84) XII(1472, 81, 88) VIII(1484)
LORENZO SEGNI b. 1481. M(1347) Bernardo Stefano Segni	Sig(1514) XVI(1520, 28) XII(1515) IX(Jun. 1527) X(1528) Dubio(1518) Sig(1476, 95) XVI(1494) XII(1486)
FRANCESCO SERRISTORI b. 1470. M(1392)  Averardo Antonio Serristori	Sig(1507, 15, 21) G(1526) XVI(1505, 15, 18) VIII(1506, 16, 24) 70(1522) B(1524) OP(1523, 25) A(1525) 12(1523, 26) Amico(1513) Sig(1468, 87) XVI(1469) XII(1485) VIII(1472)
FRANCESCO TOSINGHI b. 1471. Mg Pierfrancesco Francesco Tosinghi	PG(1523) OP(18 May 1527) IX(1528) Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>a,b,c</sup> )  Sig(1480) G(1500) XVI(1475, 04) XII(1481) VIII(1496) X(1498, 02, 04, 05, 09) CP(1498-1512) 70(1522) Dubio(1518)

**Those who distinguished themselves in the *Tumulto del Venerdì***

JACOPO ANTONIO ALAMANNI b. 1506. M(1354)	
ANTONIO JACOPO ALAMANNI b. 1464.	XII(1508) Nemico(1517 <sup>b</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) d. 1527. <sup>44</sup>
Jacopo Francesco Alamanni	Sig(1475) XII(1476) VIII(1494)
MESSER SALVESTRO ALDOBRANDINI b. 1499. M(1320)	
Messer Piero Salvstro Aldobrandini	Sig(1511) XVI(1509) XII(1513) VIII(1511) Amico(1513) d. 1519. <sup>45</sup>
BARDO ALTOVITI b. 1469. M(1282)	
Piero Giovanni Altoviti	Sig(1470) G(1491) XVI(1479) XII(1472) VIII(1475, 81)
FRANCESCO BANDINI b. 1495. M(No Priors)	VIII(1529) PG(1528)
Pierantonio Guaspere Bandini	CP(1498) d. 1499. <sup>46</sup>
MAESTRO GIROLAMO BUONAGRAZIA b. 1469. M <sup>47</sup>	Sig(1507) XVI(1502) IX(1527) Nemico(1517 <sup>b</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> )
Bartolomeo Giovanni Buonagrazia	Sig(1491, 1500) XII(1495, 98, 1505) VIII(1508)
BARTOLOMEO CAVALCANTI b. 1503. Mg	
Mainardo Bartolomeo Cavalcanti	Sig(1509) PG(Sept. 1512) Amico(1513) Dubio(1518)
FRANCESCO CORSI M(1354)	
Jacopo Simone Corsi	XII(1509) Nemico(1517 <sup>b</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) d. 1530. <sup>48</sup>
RINALDO CORSINI b. 1487. M(1290)	Sig(1528)
Filippo Bertoldo Corsini	Sig(1479, 83)

<sup>44</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxiii, p. 13.

<sup>45</sup> Martines, *Lawyers*, p. 509.

<sup>46</sup> 'Della famiglia de' Baroncelli', *Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, xvii (Florence, 1783) p. 214.

<sup>47</sup> Buonagrazia, as his father, had been in the Minor Guilds before 1512.

<sup>48</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 133, f. 36<sup>f</sup>.

GIOVANNI LANFREDINI b. 1503. M(1334) Lanfredino Jacopo Lanfredini	Sig(1492, 98, 1512) G(1501, 17) XVI(1486,1504) XII(1512) Mt(1503) X(1505, 09, Dec. 1512) VIII(1491, 1518) CP(1498-1512) B(1512) PG(1513, 14, 15) 70(1514) 17(1514) A(1512) 12(1512, 15, 17, 19) OP(1514, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19)Amico(1513, 18 <sup>a,b</sup> ) d. 1518. <sup>49</sup>
MESSER ANTONIO NERLI Mg Francesco Nerli	Canon  Political career unknown
JACOPO PAGANELLI b. 1494. M(1282) Niccolò Jacopo Paganelli	XII(1528) Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>b</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> )
PIERFILIPPO PANDOLFINI b. 1498. M(1381) Alessandro Messer Carlo Pandolfini	Sig(1516) VIII(1492)
PIERFILIPPO PANDOLFINI b. 1502. M(1381) Francesco Pierfilippo Pandolfini	Sig(1499,1503) G(1519) XII(1499) CP(1505-09) VIII(1513) 70(1514) OP(1515, 19) 12(1516, 19) Amico(1513) d. 1520. <sup>50</sup>
PIERFRANCESCO PORTINARI b. 1484. M(1282) Folcho Adovardo Portinari	XVI(1518, Jul. 1527) Sig(1529) XII(1530) X(1528) HP(1530) Dubio(1518) XVI(1485) B(1524) Dubio(1518)
GIOVANNI RINUCCINI b. 1466. M(1347)  Simone Giovanni Rinuccini	Sig(1501, Jul. 1512, 28) XII(1500, 04, 09) CP(1500) 20(May 1527) X (1529) VIII(18 May 1527) HP(1529) X(1530) Nemico(1517 <sup>b,c</sup> , 1518 <sup>a,b</sup> )
SER GIULIANO DA RIPA b. 1459. M Ser Domenico Giuliano da Ripa	
DANIELLO STROZZI b. 1475. M(1283) Niccola Niccola Strozzi	Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>a,b,c</sup> , 1518 <sup>a,b</sup> ) d. 1527. <sup>51</sup>
FRANCESCO DE' TANAGLI M(1452) Michelangelo Messer Guglielmo de' Tanagli	XII(1482)

<sup>49</sup> M. Mansfield, *A Family of Decent Folk (Lanfredini) 1200-1741* (Florence, 1922) p. 240.

<sup>50</sup> A.S.F., *Tratte*, 906, f. 66<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> Cambi, *Istorie*, xxii, p. 336.

PIERO VETTORI XVI(1529)  
 b. 1499. M(1320)  
 Jacopo Luigi Vettori d. 1506.<sup>52</sup>

APPENDIX A, xii.

**Those condemned for verbal offences against the Medici regime 1512-1527**

Date of Condemnation. <sup>53</sup>		
13 Oct. 1512	MAGISTER JACOPO DA MONTEFALCHO  FRA SIMONE DA FIVIZANO  FRA PIERO ROBERTO DAL CASTELLARIO	Augustine friars from Santo Spirito
22 Jan. 1513	ALESSANDRO MANETTI <sup>54</sup> b. 1461. m  Andrea Manetto Manetti	XVI(Sept. 1494, 1504) Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>b,c</sup> )  Sig(1501) XVI(1497) XII(1502) A(Dec. 1494) d. 1503. <sup>55</sup>
22 Jan. 1513	PIERO BARTOLO ANTONIO	Once a baker, from the parish of San Paolo
22 Jan. 1513	MARTINO SCARFI b. 1474. M(1363) Francesco Martino Scarfi	XVI(1510) Mt(1508, 11) Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>b</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) Sig(1477, 81) G(Nov. 1494) XVI(1486) VIII(1485) Mt(1491, 95, 01) 17(1490) A(Dec. 1494) X(1497) CP(1498-1501) d. 1501. <sup>56</sup>
26 Feb. 1513	UBERTINO BONCIANNI b. 1477. M(1286) Francesco Guido Boncianni  FRANCESCO SERRAGLI  Paolo Francesco Serragli	Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>c</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> )  Sig(1487) VIII(1488)  XII(1530) XVI(1528) b. 1469. M(1325) Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>b,c</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> )

<sup>52</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 54 (Vettori), tav. iii.

<sup>53</sup> Each date records a separate condemnation. Where more than one individual was condemned on the same day, a single date has been given where they were condemned together as a group, and the date repeated where they were condemned separately.

<sup>54</sup> Manetti is sometimes referred to without the surname, as Alessandro di Andrea di Manetto, but the surname is used in the *Tratte* when recording his date of birth.

<sup>55</sup> Guidi, 1494, p. 173.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.

1 Mar. 1513	PANDOLFO BILIOTTI b. 1477. M(1299) Baldassare Gualtieri Biliotti	Nemico(1513, 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) Sig(1476) XII(1458, 65, 88)
	DUCCIO ADIMARI b. 1473. Mg Bernardo Duccio Adimari	Nemico(1513, 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) XVI(1467)
5 Mar. 1513	GIOVANNI BARTOLOMEI <sup>57</sup> b. 1464. m  Ser Antonio Ser Battista Bartolomei	Sig(1493, 98) XVI(1501, 08) 20(May 1527) IX(Jun. 1527) XVI(1528) Nemico(1517 <sup>b,c</sup> , 1518 <sup>a,b</sup> ) d. c1500. <sup>58</sup>
18 Apr. 1513	FRANCESCO MARCHI b. 1471. M(1389) Marco Messer Francesco Marchi	
11 June 1513	MAGISTER MARCO DA MILANO	Provost of Ognissanti
	FRA NICCOLÒ MATTHEO AGOSTINO	Friar of Ognissanti
	FRA LORENZO EUGENIO DA CIGOLI	Friar of Ognissanti
	GIUSTO DELLA BADESSA M(1287) Piero Zanobi della Badessa	Sig(1466) XVI(1472, 80) XII(1469)
	MESSER BARTOLOMEO REDDITI b. 1455. M(1463). <sup>60</sup> Andrea Antonio Redditi	XII(1503) CP(1500) d. 1523. <sup>59</sup> Sig(1463) VIII(1474)
16 Aug. 1513	FRANCESCO GIOVANNI MONALDO	Linen weaver
29 Sept. 1513	FRANCESCO DEL PUGLIESE b. 1458. M(1463) Filippo Francesco del Pugliese	Sig(1490, 98) XVI(1496) MP(1509) Nemico(1517 <sup>b,c</sup> ) Sig(1463)
14 Oct. 1513	GIOVANBATTISTA PETRUCCI b. 1486. M(1425) <sup>61</sup> Alamanno Cesare Petrucci	Sig(1484) XVI(Jan. 1494) XII(1482) VIII(1502) CP(1500)
15 Oct. 1513	BARTOLO GIOVANNI	Weaver of German origin
10 Jan. 1514	CECCHONE BERNARDO DA GUBBIO	Footman

<sup>57</sup> Bartolomei is sometimes referred to without the surname, as Giovanni di Ser Antonio di Ser Battista, but the surname is used in the *Tratte* when recording his date of birth.

<sup>58</sup> Marzi, *Cancellaria*, p. 272.

<sup>59</sup> Martines, *Lawyers*, p. 495.

<sup>60</sup> Redditi's father was in the minor guilds.

<sup>61</sup> The Petrucci family's Priors were for the minor guilds before 1434, Pesman Cooper, 'Florentine Ruling Group', p. 141.

TONIONE LIONARDO DA BOLOGNA

	GIOVANNI GUICCIARDINI b. 1489. M(1302) Niccolò Giovanni Guicciardini	Sig(Jan. 1494) XII(1485)
4 Feb. 1514	ANDREA SIMONE	Tinker
31 Dec. 1514	BARTOLOMEO PANDOLFINI b. 1450. M(1381) Pandolfo Messer Giannozzo Pandolfini	Sig(1489) XVI(1501) VIII(1503) CP(1501-03) d. 1517. <sup>62</sup> Sig(1459) XVI(1456) Mt(1463)
10 Jul. 1515	NICCOLÒ PAGANELLI b. 1468. M(1282) Jacopo Niccolò Paganelli	XII(1528) Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>b</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) Sig(1473) XVI(1478) CP(1498-1500)
16. Dec.1515	LARIONE BUONGUGLIELMI b. 1445. <sup>63</sup> M(No Priors) <sup>64</sup> Guglielmo Messer Salvestro Buonguglielmi	
11 Apr. 1517	CAMILLO ANTINORI b. 1484. M(1351) Niccolò Tommaso Antinori	XII(Mar. 1517) Sig(1484, 98, 01) XVI(1502) XII(1487, 97) VIII(1506) PG(1515) Mt(1504, 06, 09, 15) X(1507) Amico(1513)
28 Apr. 1517	GIOVANNI BARTOLOMEO BUONCAMPAGNIO	From the parish of San Pier Maggiore
30 Jul. 1518	ANDREA RINUCCINI b. 1489. M(1347) Neri Filippo Rinuccini	Nemico(1517 <sup>b</sup> ) XVI(1495) VIII(1500) CP(1498-1504) d. 1508. <sup>65</sup>
3 Aug. 1518	FRANCESCO CARCHERELLI b. 1491. <sup>66</sup> M(1346) Giovannbattista Francesco Carcherelli	
29 Jul. 1519	JACOPO ALTOVITI b. 1479. M(1282) Ottaviano Oddo Altoviti	XII(1517) Nemico(1518 <sup>b</sup> ) Sig(1460)
21 Dec. 1521	FRA SPIRITO	
2 Dec. 1522	FRANCESCO TOSINGHI Mg Rinieri Francesco Tosinghi	XVI(1487) XII(1485)

<sup>62</sup> B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 156 (Pandolfini), tav. iii.

<sup>63</sup> Parenti, "Storia", II IV 171, f. 124<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>64</sup> Buonguglielmi's grandfather was born in Perugia and became a Florentine citizen in 1432, P. Mari, 'Salvestro Buonguglielmi', *D.B.I.*, xv, pp. 237-41.

<sup>65</sup> Rinuccini, *Ricordi storici*, p. 261.

<sup>66</sup> B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 8, f. 69<sup>r</sup>.

1 Oct. 1523	MARTINO SCARFI b. 1474. M(1363) Francesco Martino Scarfi	XVI(1510) Mt(1508, 11) Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>b</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) Sig(1477, 81) G(Nov. 1494) XVI(1486) VIII(1485) Mt(1491, 95, 01) 17(1490). A(Dec 1494) X(1497) CP(1498-1501) d. 1501.
19 Oct. 1523	FRANCESCO TORRIGIANI b. 1470. m Torrignano Antonio Torrigiani	Sig(1462, 97) VIII(1472, 96)
20 Oct. 1523	ALESSANDRO MANETTI b. 1461. m Andrea Manetto Manetti	XVI(Sept. 1494, 1504) Nemico(1513, 17 <sup>b,c</sup> ) Sig(1501) XVI(1497) XII(1502) A(Dec. 1494) d. 1503
24 Nov. 1523	PIERO ORLANDINI b. 1466. M(1286)  Giovanni Simone Orlandini	Sig(1507) XVI(1518) VIII(1506, 20) PG(1505) Nemico(1513, 1517 <sup>a,b,c</sup> , 1518 <sup>a</sup> ) Dubio(1518) Sig(1467) G(1472) XII(1461) VIII(1479) M(1472) 70(1481)
27 Apr. 1526	SIMONE GABRIELLO SIMONE	From the jurisdiction of Pisa, living in Santa Maria al Monte

APPENDIX A, xiii.

**Those condemned for verbal offences against popular regimes  
1502-1512, 1527-1530**

Date of Condemnation.		
22 Apr. 1503	LUIGI MANELLI b. 1450. Mg Giovanni Niccolò Manelli	CP(1500-1502)
10 Dec. 1527	BENEDETTO BUONDELMONTI b. 1481. Mg Filippo Lorenzo Buondelmonti	Sig(1523) XII(1511) VIII(1513) 70(1524) 12(1525) Amico(1517, 1518 <sup>a,b</sup> ) Sig(1500) G(Nov. 1512) XVI(1484) X(1495) XII(Dec. 1494) IX(1508) 20(Sept. 1512) B(1512) 70(1514) OP(1514, 15, 16, 18) VIII(1521) 17(1514) 12(1512) A(1512) Amico(1513, 18 <sup>b</sup> )



3 Feb. 1528	MICHELE MODESTI DA PRATO b. 1510. M(No Priors) <sup>67</sup> Messer Jacopo Ser Michele Modesti da Prato	d. 1530. <sup>68</sup>
3 May 1528	GIROLAMO DEGLI ALBIZZI b. 1483. M(1282) Zanobi Lucantonio degli Albizzi	Sig(1516) XII(1500) VIII(1503) d. 1529. <sup>69</sup>
2 Aug. 1528	FRA LODOVICO FRANCESCO DE' GUGLIELMI	Guardian in Santa Croce
6 Nov. 1528	JACOPO ALAMANNI b. 1506. M(1354) Antonio Jacopo Alamanni	XII(1508) Nemico(1517 <sup>b</sup> , 1518 <sup>b</sup> ) d. 1527.
7 May 1529	FRA BONAVENTURA GIOVANNI DA CASTELFRANCO	Formerly of San Marco
5 Jun. 1529	ANTONIO FRANCESCO BRUCIOLI b. 1487. No Guild	
15 Oct. 1529	CARLO COCCHI b. 1486. M(1376) Messer Antonio Messer Donato Cocchi	Sig(1521) XVI(1518) XII(1521) VIII(1526) Amico(1518 <sup>b</sup> )
17 Jun. 1530	FICINO FICINI b. c1470. <sup>70</sup> M (No Priors) Cherubino Messer Ficino Ficini	

#### SOURCES TO APPENDIX A.

1. Unless otherwise stated, information presented on those outside the Guilds comes from their condemnations.

2. A.S.F., *Tratte*, 61: 'Priorista dal 1455 al 1532', records those who held positions in the *Signoria*, the Sixteen Gonfaloniers of the Companies and the Twelve Good Men.

3. A.S.F., *Tratte*, 903, 904, 905 and 906 record those who held 'ufficii intrinseci', political office within the city, from 1455 to 1530. *Tratte* 906 also records the members of the Council of Seventy from 1514 to 1527, and of the *Balia* from 1512 to 1527, as well as the *Uomini di pratica* elected from 1528 to 1530.

4. A.S.F., *Tratte*, 85, 86, 88 and 419 record dates of birth.

5. The records of the *Consulte e Pratiche* from 1498 to 1512 have been published in *Consulte e Pratiche della repubblica fiorentina, 1498-1505*, ed. D. Fachard, 2 vols. (Florence, 1993); *Consulte e Pratiche della repubblica fiorentina, 1505-1512*, ed. D. Fachard, (Geneva, 1988).

<sup>67</sup> Modesti's father matriculated in the Major guilds in 1515, and was made a Florentine citizen in 1519, Martines, *Lawyers*, p. 505.

<sup>68</sup> Marzi, *Cancellaria*, pp. 319, 514.

<sup>69</sup> Litta, *Famiglie*, dispp. 178-80 (Albizzi), tav. xiii.

<sup>70</sup> L. Felini, 'Ficino Ficini', *D.B.I.*, 47 (Rome, 1997), pp. 376-7.

6. Cambi, *Istorie*, xxi, p. 310, lists the twenty citizens appointed to advise the *Signoria* on constitutional reform 1 September 1512. Ibid, xxii, p. 325, lists the twenty citizens elected 27 May 1527 to regulate the re-establishment of popular government.

7. Lists of the *Accoppiatori* from 1455 to 1480, and of the members of the Council of Seventy appointed in 1480, can be found in Rubinstein, *Government*, pp. 238-44, 309-10, 316-22.

8. A list of those citizens co-opted to the Council of Seventy from 1480 until 1494 can be found in Pesman Cooper, 'Florentine Ruling Group', p. 179. A list of the Seventeen Reformers in 1480 can be found in A. Brown, 'Lorenzo, the Monte and the Seventeen Reformers', *Lorenzo de' Medici. Studi*, ed. G. Carfagnini (Florence, 1992), pp. 103-167.

9. B.N.F., N.A., 988 contains lists of supporters and opponents of the Medici regime. Nemico 1513 refers to the list on f. 92<sup>r</sup> and includes Pietropaolo Boscoli and Agostino Capponi, executed in 1513. Nemico 1517<sup>a</sup> refers to the list on f. 93<sup>r</sup>. Nemico 1517<sup>b</sup> refers to that on ff. 94<sup>r-v</sup>: 'Inimici', which is divided by Quarter. Nemico 1517<sup>c</sup> refers to that on ff. 103<sup>r</sup>-104<sup>v</sup>: 'Nota di non amici'. All three include Alessandro Acciaiuoli (d. 1517). See Butters, *Governors*, pp. 210, 244. Amico 1517 refers to the list on f. 104<sup>r</sup>: 'Confidenti', which is the counterpart to Nemico 1517<sup>c</sup>. Amico 1518<sup>a</sup> refers to the list on ff. 99<sup>r</sup>-100<sup>r</sup>: 'Confidanti e amici', which includes Lanfredino Lanfredini (d. 1518). Nemico 1518<sup>a</sup> refers to the counterpart of Amico 1518<sup>a</sup> on ff. 98<sup>r-v</sup>: 'Nota di non amici'. Amico 1518<sup>b</sup>, Dubio, and Nemico 1518<sup>b</sup> refer to the three parts of the list on ff. 140<sup>r</sup>-164<sup>v</sup>: 'De omni qualità cittadina di tucta la città di Firenze, quartiere per quartiere, sapientis et ordinare'. This list includes Lanfredino Lanfredini (d. 1518) and is divided into three parts, 'Amici', 'Dubii', and 'Ultimi'. It may be to this list that Parenti referred in the autumn of 1516, when he described how Lorenzo kept a book for the purposes of selecting the holders of office in which 'tutte le famiglie e gli huomini di Firenze' were divided into three parts, 'amici, inimici e neutrali', Parenti, 'Storia', B.N.F., F.P., II IV 171, f. 130<sup>r</sup>.

10. Amico 1513 refers to the list of supporters of the Medici in A.S.F., M.A.P., XCIX, n. 45, which includes Galeazzo Sassetti (d. April 1513). See Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, pp. 71-2.

11. Unless otherwise stated, details of Magnate families, and of the first Prior of families in the Major guilds, are from Pesman Cooper, 'Florentine Ruling Group' pp. 130-148.

## Appendix B

### Opponents banished or sent to their villas in August 1517.<sup>71</sup>

#### TO BOLOGNA

Giovanni Simone Folchi  
Bartolomeo Simone Corsi  
Giovanni Antonio Peruzzi  
Tommaso Francesco Tosinghi and sons

#### TO MODENA

Giovanni Simone Rinuccini  
Buonaccorso Simone Rinuccini  
Carlo Niccolò Federighi  
Alessandro Andrea Manetto Manetti<sup>72</sup>  
Francesco Pierfrancesco Tosinghi<sup>73</sup>

#### IN VILLA

Francesco Paolo Serragli <sup>74</sup>	Giovanni Ser Antonio Ser Battista Bartolomei <sup>75</sup>
Ubertino Francesco Guidi Boncianni	Piero Bancho da Verrazzano
Andrea Antonio Cambini and sons	Alessandro Filippo Girolami
Carlo Apardo Lottini	Bernardo Dante da Castiglione
Francesco Apardo Lottini	Roberto Dante da Castiglione
Bartolomeo Antonio Pescioni	
Bernardo Angiolini	At least four miles from the city
Sandro Niccolò Buongirolami	At least four miles from the city
Niccolò Jacopo Paganelli	To Serezana

<sup>71</sup> A.S.F., O.G., 168, ff. 91<sup>r</sup>-92<sup>r</sup> (22, 23 and 24 August 1517). B.N.F., N.A., 988, f. 96<sup>r</sup>: 'Non amici', is an incomplete list of those confined which includes Tommaso Giacomini, to be sent to his villa.

<sup>72</sup> The surname is omitted.

<sup>73</sup> Given as Francesco 'detto "Cechotto"' Tosinghi.

<sup>74</sup> Given in error as Francesco di Piero Serragli.

<sup>75</sup> The surname is omitted.

## Appendix C

### Opponents detained in the Palace by the *Signoria*, 3 December 1521.<sup>76</sup>

#### FROM THE QUARTER OF SAN GIOVANNI

Tommaso Tosinghi

Francesco Tosinghi<sup>77</sup>

Filippo degli Albizzi

Niccolò Valori and his sons

#### SANTA MARIA NOVELLA

Piero Bartolomeo Popoleschi

Carlo Niccolò Federighi

Lamberto Cambi

Pieradovardo Giachinotti

Bernardo Giachinotti

#### SANTA CROCE

Buonaccorso Rinuccini

Giovanni Rinuccini

Giovanni Antonio Peruzzi

#### SANTO SPIRITO

Niccolò Braccio Guicciardini

Francesco Serragli

Giovanni Ser Antonio Ser Battista Bartolomei<sup>78</sup>

Niccolò Paganelli

Battista Bastiano Pitti

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<sup>76</sup> A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 123, f. 162<sup>r</sup>. The list is arranged according to Quarter.

<sup>77</sup> Given as Cecchotto Tosinghi. A.S.F., Sig. e Coll., Delib., o.a., 123, f. 162<sup>r</sup>. The list is arranged according to Quarter.

<sup>78</sup> The surname is omitted.

## Appendix D

### The Family Responsibilities of Young Conspirators

i.

#### The Overthrow of Soderini, August 1512.<sup>79</sup>

Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi	Married 1508	Giovanni Rucellai	Never married
Maso degli Albizzi	Two children by 1512	Palla Rucellai	Married after 1512
Giovanni degli Albizzi	A son born 1511	Simone Tornabuoni	A son born 1505
Benedetto Buondelmonti	A son born 1511	Bartolomeo Valori	A son born 1509
Gino Capponi	A son born 1503	Giovanni Vespucci	Married 1500
Francesco Rucellai	Married 1519	Paolo Vettori	A son born 1500

APPENDIX D, ii.

#### The *Parlamento* of September 1512.<sup>80</sup>

Francesco Altoviti	Married 1525	Giovanni Antonio Rucellai	Married 1507
Roberto del Beccuto	Married 1519	Palla Rucellai	Married after 1512
Cosimo Bartoli	A daughter born 1509	Piero Rucellai	Four sons by 1512
Matteo Bartoli	Three sons by 1512	Francesco Salviati	A son born 1507
Filippo Ricasoli	Married 1513	Prinzivalle della Stufa	Unmarried in 1512
Giovanni Bernardo Rucellai	Never married		

<sup>79</sup> A.S.F., *Tratte*, 88, ff. 208<sup>v</sup>, 221<sup>r</sup>, 231<sup>r</sup>, 264<sup>v</sup>; B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 8, f. 5<sup>v</sup>; Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 54 (Tornabuoni), tav. ii; *Ibid.*, disp. 178-80 (Albizzi), tavv. xix, xx; Devonshire Jones, *Francesco Vettori*, p. xi; Passerini, *Rucellai*, pp. 57-9, 132-3, 139 and tavv. vii, xvi.

<sup>80</sup> A.S.F., *Tratte*, 88, ff. 135<sup>v</sup>, 218<sup>r</sup>, 245<sup>r</sup>; B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 8, f. 42<sup>v</sup>; *Ibid.*, 186 (del Beccuto); Passerini, *Altoviti*, tav. xii; *Idem*, *Ricasoli*, tav. xiv; *Idem*, *Rucellai*, tav. xi.

## APPENDIX D, iii.

**The Tumulto del Venerdì.**<sup>81</sup>

Jacopo Alamanni	Married by 1527	Pierfilippo di Francesco Pandolfini	Married 1529
Salvestro Aldobrandini	Married 1520	Giuliano Salviati	Married 1530
Francesco Bandini	A son born 1524	Piero Salviati	Married 1542
Bartolomeo Cavalcanti	A son born 1526	Piero Vettori	A son born 1519
Alamanno de' Pazzi	Married 1520		

<sup>81</sup> Brucioli, *Dialogi*, p. 59 (Alamanni); Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 66 (Aldobrandini), tav. ii; 'Della famiglia de' Baroncelli', *Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, xvii, p. 217; B. Cavalcanti, *Lettere*, ed. C. Roaf (Bologna, 1967), p. xvii; Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 128 (Pazzi), tav. v; B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 156 (Pandolfini), tav. vi; Hurtubise, *Salviati*, pp. 225, 497; B.N.F., Mss. Passerini, 8, f. 37<sup>r</sup>; Litta, *Famiglie*, disp. 54 (Vettori), tav. iii.

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## D. Theses

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