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The Logic of Political Conflict in Medieval Cities

Italy & the Southern Low Countries, 1370–1440

PATRICK LANTSCHNER

THE LOGIC OF POLITICAL CONFLICT IN MEDIEVAL CITIES

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List of Abbreviations

AAC	ASVer, Antico Archivio del Comune
ADN	Archives départementales du Nord, Lille
AML	Archives municipales, Lille
AN	Archives nationales, Paris
ASB	Archivio di Stato, Bologna
ASF	Archivio di Stato, Florence
ASVen	Archivio di Stato, Venice
ASVer	Archivio di Stato, Verona
BML	Bibliothèque municipale, Lille
Chronique	'Chronique des Pays-Bas, de France, d'Angleterre et de Tournai', in *Corpus chronicorum Flandriae*, ed. J.-J. de Smet, III (CRH, Brussels, 1856)
Corpus	*Corpus chronicorum bononiensium*, ed. A. Sorbelli, III (RIS$_2$, XVIII.1, Città di Castello, 1905)
CP	ASF, Consulte e pratiche
CRH	Commission royale d'histoire
CRJB	'Chronique du règne de Jean de Bavière', in *Chroniques liégeoises*, ed. S. Balau, I (CRH, Brussels, 1913)
Croniques	*Croniques de Franche, d'Engleterre, de Flandres, de Lile et espécialment de Tournay*, ed. A. Hocquet (Mons, 1938)
Diario	*Diario d'anonimo fiorentino dall'anno 1358 al 1389*, ed. A. Gherardi (Documenti di storia italiana, VI, Florence, 1876)
Griffoni	Matteo Griffoni, *Memoriale historicum de rebus bononiensium*, ed. L. Frati and A. Sorbelli (RIS$_2$, XVIII.2, Città di Castello, 1902)
LO	*Recueil des ordonnances de la principauté de Liège: première série, 974–1506*, ed. S. Bormans (Brussels, 1878)
LR	*Régestes de la cité de Liège (1103–1482)*, ed. É. Fairon, 5 vols. (Liège, 1933–9)
Monstrelet	Enguerran de Monstrelet, *Chronique*, ed. L. Douët-d'Arcq, 6 vols. (Société de l'Histoire de France, Paris, 1857–62)
Outremeuse	Jean d'Outremeuse, 'Chronique abrégée', in *Chroniques liégeoises*, ed. S. Balau, II (CRH, Brussels, 1931)
PI	ASB, Curia del Podestà, Libri inquisitionum et testium
PS	ASB, Curia del Podestà, Accusationes ad maleficia, Sententiae
RIS	Rerum italicarum scriptores
RIS$_2$	Rerum italicarum scriptores, second series
Rivo	Radulphus (Raoul) de Rivo, 'Gesta pontificum Leodiensium ab anno tertio Engelberti de Marcka usque ad Johannem a Bavaria', in *Qui gesta pontificum Tungrensium, Leodiensium, Traiectensium,*

	et Leodiensium scripserunt auctores praecipui, ed. J. Chapeauville, III (Liège, 1616)
Sanudo	Marino Sanudo, *Vitae ducum venetorum italice scriptae ab origine urbis sive ab anno 421 usque ad annum 1493* (RIS, XXII, Milan, 1733)
Stavelot	Jean de Stavelot, *Chronique de Jean de Stavelot*, ed. A. Borgnet (CRH, Brussels, 1861)
Stavelot (*lat.*)	Jean de Stavelot, 'Chronique latine de Jean de Stavelot', in *Chroniques liégeoises*, ed. S. Balau, I (CRH, Brussels, 1913)
Stefani	Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, *Cronaca fiorentina*, ed. N. Rodolico (RIS$_2$, XXX.1, Città di Castello, 1903)
TR, I	*Extraits analytiques des anciens registres des consaux de la ville de Tournai (1385–1422)*, ed. H. Vandenbroeck (Mémoires de la Société historique et littéraire de Tournai, VII, Tournai, 1861)
TR, II	*Extraits analytiques des anciens registres des consaux de la ville de Tournai (1422–1430)*, ed. H. Vandenbroeck (Mémoires de la Société historique et littéraire de Tournai, VIII, Tournai, 1863)
TR, III	*Extraits analytiques des anciens registres des consaux de la ville de Tournai (1431–1476)*, ed. A. de la Grange (Mémoires de la Société historique et littéraire de Tournai, XXIII, Tournai, 1893)
Tumulto	*Il tumulto dei Ciompi: cronache e memorie*, ed. G. Scaramella (RIS$_2$, XVIII.3, Bologna, 1917–34)
	Acciaioli—'Cronaca di Alamanno Acciaioli con aggiunte anonime', 11–41
	Bonifazii—'Lettera di Nanni Bonifazii', 149–54
	Compagnano—'Diario compagnano', 106–23
	Guicciardini—'Ricordanza di Luigi Guicciardini', 47–9
	Lettera d'anonimo—'Lettera d'anonimo sul tumulto dei Ciompi', 139–48
	Nofri—'Cronaca di ser Nofri di ser Piero delle Riformagioni', 51–66
	Peruzzi—'Ricordanza di Simone Peruzzi', 42–6
	Squittinatore—'Cronaca dello squittinatore', 67–102
	Strozziana—'Cronachetta strozziana', 126–34
Zagata	Piero Zagata, *Cronica della città di Verona da Pier Zagata ampliata e suppleta*, ed. G. Biancolini, II.1 (Verona, 1747)
Zantfliet	Corneille de Zantfliet, 'Chronicon', in *Veterum scriptorum et monumentorum historicorum, dogmaticorum, moralium, amplissima collectio*, ed. É. Martène and U. Durand, V (Paris, 1729)
1402	*La chronique liégeoise de 1402*, ed. É. Bacha (Brussels, 1900)

All references are to page numbers, unless otherwise stated. Roman and Arabic numerals in brackets refer to chapters or sections within a work. All dates are modern style. The vernacular versions of names have been preferred. Names have been anglicized in cases for which this is established use.

Introduction

A complex view of political conflict puzzles readers of Niccolò Machiavelli's major historical work, the *Discourses on Livy*, to this day. Machiavelli suggested that the tumults in republican Rome were not exceptional, but essential parts of political life. They were not, as most classical authors had argued, an impediment to Rome's political development, but actually made that city stronger and more powerful. Machiavelli admitted to the fact that people crying out against the Senate, running through the streets, and leaving Rome in masses might seem 'extraordinary and almost wild' to anyone reading about these events. However, he concluded that each city had 'its modes with which the people can vent its ambition', and Rome's remarkable constitution had itself been the product of the conflicts in that city. For reasons informed by his own political concerns, Machiavelli mainly referred to the conflicts between Roman nobles and plebs, and argued that it was right for the plebs to voice their ambitions in conflict while Rome relied on them to fight her wars.[1] For a former high-ranking official of the Florentine state, this was a remarkable statement to make in the 1510s when his home city itself had experienced revolts after the demise of the Medici regime, and when political convulsions had driven him from public office in 1512. Machiavelli was also quick to qualify his remarks: under a variety of circumstances, conflicts could also degenerate and harm a city greatly.[2]

Whatever his normative judgement, Machiavelli recognized that, in certain contexts, conflict was an ordinary feature of political life and even a necessary form of political interaction. In this respect, he expressed one dimension of a wider logic of conflict which lay at the heart of public life

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[1] Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, 14–15 (I.4); see also 20–2 (I.6).
[2] See, for instance, Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, 78–81 (I.37). For Machiavelli's views on conflict, see Cadoni, 'Machiavelli teorico dei conflitti sociali'; Bock, 'Civil Discord'; Najemy, 'Society, Class, and State'.

in the cities of late medieval Europe. The aim of this book is to trace this logic. It regards conflicts as essential features of the political systems which existed and developed around the manifold forms of disagreement in these cities, ranging from concealed forms of protest over specific issues to full-blown revolts aimed at the reorganization of the body politic. Conflict and its logic were embedded in a particular form of political organization which was characteristic of late medieval cities. As conglomerates of multiple political units and bases of organization—urban governments, neighbourhood organizations, guilds, ecclesiastical institutions, political associations, as well as external agencies—cities gave rise to a polycentric order in which political relations were often multi-faceted and shifting. It is in this context that late medieval city dwellers developed particular rationales of legitimation, diverse modes of behaviour, and various forms of association through which they could express and negotiate conflict. At the same time, different configurations of these political units encouraged different patterns of conflict which could vary from city to city and which gave rise to distinct political systems. This, then, is an attempt at writing a political history of the late Middle Ages which does not take as its focus the increasing consolidation of states that has always been seen as one of the hallmarks of this period. It is, instead, structured around the presence of conflict in cities which themselves are a lasting heritage of the late Middle Ages.

A crucial aspect of this book and its argument is its comparative dimension. Because cities are such complex microcosms, historians have often tended to study them in isolation from each other. In this book, the logic of conflict is explored in the cities of the two most densely urbanized areas of late medieval Europe: Northern and Central Italy and the Southern Low Countries. Such a comparative perspective can yield several insights. First, considerable similarities existed even between cities in geographically, culturally, and politically distinct areas such as those under consideration here. In the context of the broadly shared polycentric character of cities, the ways to defend, engage in, and organize for conflicts were often similar on either side of the Alps. Second, comparisons also allow us to identify differences which would otherwise be hard to notice: in some cities, revolt was an almost endemic form of political interaction, while in others low-level forms of conflict featured prominently. Such differences tended to cut across regional divides between Italy and the Southern Low Countries. It will emerge from the six case studies of this book that Bologna's system of conflict was quite similar to that of Liège, Lille's to that of Verona, and Florence's to that of Tournai. By comparing several different political systems, it will therefore be possible to understand the ways

in which conflict constituted a crucial part of political organization across cities, and to reconstruct the logic which underlay its conduct.

THE POLYCENTRIC ORDER OF CITIES

To piece together this logic of conflict, it is necessary to understand the framework of political and legal organization within which city dwellers thought, acted, and associated with each other. It is in this respect that my argument diverges most significantly from existing interpretations. For a long time, the historiography of urban conflicts has tended to privilege an understanding of the political order in which the intrusive governments of centralizing late medieval states were seen as increasingly asserting their control over recalcitrant subject populations.[3] Michel Mollat and Philippe Wolff, in what was for a long time the most important monograph on urban, as well as rural, revolts, interpreted the most momentous political struggles of the Jacquerie and the Tuchins in France (respectively 1358 and *c.*1363–84), the Ciompi revolt of Florence (1378), the Artevelde conflicts of Ghent (1338–45 and 1379–85), and the English Rising (1381) as stand-offs between state-centred elites organized around central or urban governments, on the one hand, and social forces, on the other hand. As Mollat and Wolff did not fail to point out, such conflicts constituted no real threat to the political order because they were episodic and spontaneous by nature.[4] Between the 1950s and 1970s, this interpretation was contested by Marxist historians who viewed the same revolts as much more ingrained in the very structure of society and as the product of structural inequalities in the socio-economic 'base'. However, in certain ways, Marxists operated within a conceptual paradigm which shared certain assumptions with that of their conservative counterparts: they also interpreted revolts as struggles between oppressing elites and oppressed subjects which culminated in temporary disruptions of the existing order. Although less concerned with states, such interpretations often replicated a similarly monolithic conception of late medieval politics.[5]

[3] For this understanding of the political order in the historiography of late medieval state-building, see especially Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States*, 1–3; Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, 15–16; Guenée, *States and Rulers*, 6; Genet, 'L'état moderne', 261–2.

[4] Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, esp. 271–318. For similar views, see Guenée, *States and Rulers*, 192–9; Genet, 'L'état moderne', 265–9; Chevalier, *Les bonnes villes*, 299–313; Brucker, 'Ciompi Revolution', 356; Rotz, 'Investigating Urban Uprisings', 217–20.

[5] Rutenburg, *Popolo e movimenti popolari*, 25–88; the contributions in Engelmann, *Städtische Volksbewegungen*; for a critical perspective from within Marxism, see Czok, 'Zunftkämpfe, Zunftrevolutionen oder Bürgerkämpfe', 129–36; for comparisons with rural revolts, see Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free*, 25–62.

In the last few decades, historians have drastically widened their focus beyond the handful of revolts studied by Mollat and Wolff. In the latest monograph on this subject, Samuel Cohn uncovered 1,112 cases of (what he defined as) popular revolt in the cities of Flanders, France, and Italy between 1200 and 1425. The European Science Foundation's seven-volume *Origins of the Modern State in Europe* dedicated an entire volume to the theme of *Resistance, Representation, and Community* in which revolt was treated as only one among several other forms of conflict.[6] As will be seen below, many historians have also moved on from a state-centred perspective on late medieval politics, but this remains a crucial point of reference as far as the subject of revolts and political conflict in cities is concerned. Cohn, as well as others, have continued to characterize such conflicts as the response of social classes, or local communities, to the fiscal and military demands of urban and governmental elites of centralizing late medieval states whose control over the political order they intended to disrupt and challenge.[7] Conversely, some historians have suggested that many conflicts, even revolts, were not directed against processes of state formation, even when led by intrusive rulers. Insurgents either actively supported or indirectly drove the growth of governments and the political order guaranteed by them. According to Peter Blickle this even turned revolts into quasi-constitutional mechanisms of *ancien régime* states.[8]

There are two distinct problems with these approaches. First, although some conflicts can fit a model where the principal dividing line is between state-centred elites and social forces, not all do. Social classes, local communities, or governments did not always constitute united fronts, and divisions often ran right through and across these groups. Recent studies by Jan Dumolyn, Jelle Haemers, and Christian Liddy on the networks and ideologies of urban rebels in late medieval Flanders and England have suggested that the divisions between governors and governed, and oppressors and oppressed were often fluid. Even outside the dramatic situations of revolt, middling and even the lowest ranks of urban society were not

[6] Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, 14; Blickle, *Resistance, Representation, and Community*. For reasons of space it is impossible to list the numerous publications, but for extensive bibliographies, see Blickle's volume and his *Unruhen in der ständischen Gesellschaft*; Bourin *et al., Rivolte urbane e rivolte contadine*; Dumolyn and Haemers, 'Patterns of Urban Rebellion'.

[7] Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, 53–107, but see his different characterization of England in Cohn, *Popular Protest in Late Medieval England*, 7–9; Blockmans, 'Princes conquérants', 176–81; Blockmans, 'Alternatives to Monarchical Centralisation', 148–54; Boone and Prak, 'Rulers, Patricians and Burghers', 99–101.

[8] Blickle, *Unruhen in der ständischen Gesellschaft*, 100–7; Blickle, *Kommunalismus*, I, 131–59, II, 244–63; Watts, *Making of Polities*, 270–86; Gauvard, *Violence et ordre public*, 206–13.

fully excluded from the urban political process to which they contributed through a variety of direct and indirect channels.[9] A more complex understanding of the patterns of interaction is, therefore, necessary. Although opposition to a variety of state agencies remains an important axis in conflicts, it must be recognized that it is not the only or even the most important one.

Second, on a methodological level, such a perspective has often led to urban political conflicts being subsumed in a schema which contrasts 'order' and 'disorder'.[10] Because conflict has so often been seen in contrast to, and comparison with, state-controlled political processes, it has frequently been too readily treated as a disruptive, even pathological, force. A long tradition of historical enquiry has taken the notion of 'revolution' as the yardstick against which late medieval urban revolts were measured. In a flurry of studies on this subject in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, liberal and Marxist historians often celebrated the most dramatic revolts of the later Middle Ages as antecedents of 1848, 1871, or even 1789. Bringing similar expectations to the subject, conservatives largely disputed the 'revolutionary' nature of these revolts by downplaying them as isolated, if subversive, incidents in which the attempts of subaltern classes to threaten state power necessarily failed.[11] In the last few decades, historians have been more cautious, but, as I have argued elsewhere, the modern conceptual baggage of terms such as state, class, and revolution continued to conjure up an untenable dichotomy between state-controlled 'order' and 'disorder' into which political conflict and revolt always risked being shaped.[12] In respect of other seeming forms of 'disorder', historians have been more willing to reconceptualize. Collective action, disputes, *vendetta*, violence, and warfare are no longer seen as pathological phenomena, but as integral parts of cultural, social, and political interaction.[13] It would, of

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[9] Dumolyn and Haemers, 'Patterns of Urban Rebellion'; Dumolyn and Haemers, '"A Bad Chicken Was Brooding"'; Liddy and Haemers, 'Popular Politics'; Haemers, *De Gentse opstand*, 62–118; Haemers, *For the Common Good?*, 153–85, 236–42.

[10] For critical reflections on this subject, see Zorzi, '"Fracta est civitas"'; Schiera, 'Il Buongoverno "melancolico"'. Italian historians have been particularly influenced by Brunner, *Land and Lordship*.

[11] For the modern concept of revolution, see Dunn, *Modern Revolutions*, 226–57. For nineteenth-century works on medieval urban conflict, see, for instance, the analysis of the Ciompi revolt in Quinet, *Les révolutions d'Italie*, 147–67; Ferrari, *Histoire des révolutions d'Italie*, III, 501–6; Thomas, *Les révolutions politiques de Florence*, 171–93.

[12] Lantschner, '"Ciompi Revolution" Constructed'.

[13] Fundamental in this regard is the work on popular protest and riots by early modern historians, especially Thompson, 'Moral Economy of the English Crowd'; Davis, 'Rites of Violence'. Seminal contributions in the medieval context are Davies and Fouracre, *Settlement of Disputes*; Wickham, *Courts and Conflict*; Smail, *Consumption of Justice*; Zorzi, 'La cultura della vendetta'; Skoda, *Medieval Violence*; Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*; Firnhaber-Baker, *Violence and the State*.

course, be equally wrong simply to subsume political conflict into an only slightly revised notion of order. This, after all, is the criticism levied against functionalist anthropologists such as Max Gluckman who, although taking conflict seriously, treated it as a safety-valve to maintain the existing social order. As anthropologists have been suggesting more recently, the notion of order, itself culturally contingent, may not, in fact, be the most helpful way in which to approach the complex relations underlying many societies around the world.[14]

The co-ordinates of order and disorder shift when conflict is not viewed through the conceptual lens of a fundamentally modern understanding of politics. It is well-known, but still worth restating that pre-modern states were composites of multiple forms of political organization and governed by multiple kinds of law. As historians have (again) come to stress, there were obvious centralizing tendencies within many of these political entities, but most polities remained complex multi-jurisdictional configurations until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[15] These themes have been especially prominent in the Italian historiography on the regional states which developed in the late Middle Ages, the composite, indeed conflictual, nature of which has been explored in some detail.[16] Such a perspective on pre-modern politics is itself indebted to work in political science and sociology on how our conceptual notion of politics can be expanded to include a wealth of institutions beyond governments, as well as to a very long tradition of anthropological scholarship on the subject of communities.[17] Nowhere was the pluralism of organizational structures more pronounced than in cities, especially those of the Middle Ages. European cities have often been viewed as unitary and autonomous bodies, but they can more helpfully be understood as particularly densely populated polycentric arenas. The notion of polycentricity is useful because cities were constituted by multiple political centres, the powers and levels

[14] Gluckman, *Custom and Conflict*, 1–26. For critical perspectives, see especially Strathern, 'Discovering "Social Control"', 111–18; von Benda-Beckmann and Pirie, *Order and Disorder*, esp. 1–15, 150–65.

[15] Watts, *Making of Polities*, 23–36, 410–19; Blickle, *Kommunalismus*, II, 224–85; Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures*, 1–30, 80–126.

[16] See especially the contributions in three collected volumes: Chittolini *et al., Origini dello stato*, only partly translated in Kirshner, *Origins of the State*; Connell and Zorzi, *Florentine Tuscany*; Gamberini and Lazzarini, *Italian Renaissance State*. For conceptual discussions, see Petralia, '"Stato" e "moderno"'; Gentile, 'Leviatano regionale'; Gamberini, 'Principe, comunità e territori'.

[17] On institutions, see especially March and Olsen, 'New Institutionalism'; March and Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions*, 1–67; North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, 36–53; Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, 29–57. On the looser concept of community in anthropology and medieval history respectively, see Pirie and Scheele, 'Justice, Community, and Law', 11–17; Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities*, xl–lxvi.

of authority of which varied greatly, while their precise configuration was rarely fixed. This polycentric political order formed the backdrop of many forms of political conflict, and its associated discourses, practices, and action groups. Yet this did not make cities disaggregated bodies: distinct political patterns crystallized around these fragmented arenas, and different systems of conflict can be distinguished that varied from city to city.

Several different units of political organization shaped urban political processes from inside and outside the city walls.[18] Inside cities, urban governments—themselves made up of multiple agencies—were joined in the organization of public life by guilds, ecclesiastical institutions, neighbourhoods, parties, and other kinds of units. Like the institutions of urban government, these various forms of organization had often developed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when many cities doubled or trebled in size in the course of Europe's most massive demographic expansion since the fall of Rome and before the coming of industrialization. Although it has rightly been pointed out that in many cities such units saw their influence progressively reduced, they often nevertheless continued to dispose of significant economic, military, and legal powers. Other power structures impinged on cities from outside the city walls. Cities in Italy and the Southern Low Countries operated within a wider hinterland populated by rural lordships, peasant communities, and other bodies. Cities might be able to establish hegemony over these territories, but power-brokers in their hinterland were often semi-autonomous and could thrive on internal divisions as well as external connections. Beyond their hinterland, cities always existed within a wider geo-political theatre to whose tensions and powerful political players they were often directly exposed. The vast majority of the cities were, furthermore, not independent, but subject to larger states which were themselves made up of multiple agencies and linked by various bonds to the cities.

It is possible to characterize these hugely varied political units as possessing one or more of the following characteristics: they maintained varying levels of stability and cohesion across long periods; possessed some form of legal authority; developed their own rules, whether codified or not; and disposed of a financial, military, or administrative infrastructure. As recent critics of 'institutional' perspectives have pointed out, it is wrong to

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[18] The literature on urban studies is extremely fragmented and its more recent findings await synthesis, but for general overviews, see Clark, *European Cities and Towns*; Heers, *Parties and Political Life*; Heers, *Family Clans*; Scott, *City-State in Europe*; Friedrichs, 'What Made the Eurasian City Work?'. For introductions that are more specific to cities in Italy and the Southern Low Countries, see this Introduction, n. 33.

assume that even micro-political organizations were necessarily cohesive or contributed to greater political stability. Indeed, not only did conflict frequently take place around the many political units of urban arenas, but these units could themselves also be subject to divisions between varying groups that organized within or clustered around them. Rather than viewing them as self-sufficient and cohesive entities, it is most helpful to think of the various political units of urban arenas as nodal points which stood at the centre of a clustering of interactions and negotiations.[19]

   Contemporary legal understandings of cities confirm observations of their fragmented political landscape.[20] The concept of *iurisdictio*, originally understood as the power to pronounce law, was highly malleable and interpreted by medieval jurists as describing legal authority and the legitimate exercise of power in ways that could be applied to many units of political organization. It is also in the rather loose sense of legal authority that the term 'jurisdiction' is used in this book.[21] Furthermore, many urban political units were conceptualized as corporations (*universitates*) which could elect rectors, draw up rules, and own property, although jurists disagreed about the precise remit of such powers.[22] The city could itself be seen as only one of several institutions occupying urban space. The fourteenth-century Italian jurist Bartolo da Sassoferrato emphasized that not every 'collection of houses' (*aedificia in unum collata*) formed a city (*civitas*) with all the jurisdictional privileges that this brought with it.[23] This was even clearer in Northern cities, where only specific inhabitants enjoyed rights of citizenship (*bourgeoisie*), thus formally excluding other inhabitants of the same territorial area from membership in the city.[24] Concerns raised at times of political conflict usually paid attention to the nature of the cities' polycentric jurisdictional order. In the Ciompi revolt

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[19] For recent critiques in different branches of the social sciences, see Ogilvie, ' "Whatever is, is right"?', 662–79; Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict*, 21–83; Pirie and Scheele, 'Justice, Community, and Law', 17–24.

[20] For the difficulties jurists faced when defining cities, see Ryan, 'Bartolus of Sassoferrato and Free Cities', 79–87.

[21] Costa, *Iurisdictio*, 99–101 and passim; Canning, *Ideas of Power*, 9.

[22] Black, *Guilds and Civil Society*, 12–31; Blickle, *Kommunalismus*, II, 286–348; Michaud-Quantin, *Universitas*; Dilcher, 'Zur Geschichte und Aufgabe des Begriffs Genossenschaft'; Canning, 'Corporation'. For the historiography and conceptual paradigms underlying the historiography on corporations, Runciman, *Pluralism and the Personality of the State*, esp. 34–85.

[23] Bartolo da Sassoferrato, 'Tractatus super constitutione Qui sint rebelles', fos. 102v–103r; for this passage, see also Quaglioni, ' "Civitas" '. Baldo degli Ubaldis's notion of *civitas* appears to have been more territorial; see Canning, *Political Thought of Baldus*, 127–31.

[24] For the concept of *bourgeoisie*, see, for instance, Jean Boutillier, *Somme rurale*, 793–6 (II.19), a late fourteenth-century custumal. For concepts of citizenship, Meier, *Mensch und Bürger*.

of Florence in July 1378, a coalition formed by prominent patrician families, guildsmen, and workers did not only ask for the introduction of direct taxation and a reform of judicial penalties, but made demands concerning various institutions of the body politic. Unenfranchised workers were to be given the right to form a guild, the wool guild's judicial powers were to be curbed, and the coalition's petitions contained a whole set of demands concerning the Guelf Party and its own public powers. On a much lower scale, other forms of conflict similarly touched on the jurisdictional units of cities. In Verona—a city actually characterized by fairly weak corporate institutions—the commune itself, the mercantile association of the *Domus Mercatorum*, the *Collegio dei Giudici e Avvocati*, in addition to the city's bakers, the sellers of cheese and sausages, and on one occasion even the city's prostitutes were all engaged in jurisdictional negotiations with various agencies of the governments of Milan and Venice to confirm or extend their privileges vis-à-vis other power-players. Other conflicts touched indirectly on questions of jurisdictional organization. In Lille, a dispute in March 1434 about the retail price of wine soon led to disagreements between the city's taverners and the échevins, the city's aldermen, who passed a resolution to set a limit on wine prices. The taverners staged a strike and eventually also appealed to the duke of Burgundy to protest against this measure. Beyond the specific issue of wine prices, this conflict came to involve several jurisdictional units of Lille's body politic in a contest which had turned into a dispute over who would have the ultimate say in this matter.[25]

In light of this, I shall use the term 'political conflict' to refer to all collective interaction between opposing groups when these actions affected one of the areas of urban public organization. I employ the term 'revolt' to indicate a particular type of conflict in which insurgent coalitions sought to acquire power in the city, although we shall see below that specific practices, such as the formation of large new coalitions or the occurrence of urban warfare, are perhaps more useful indicators of the highest levels of conflict. My definition both includes and rules out specific forms of conflict. It most notably includes 'popular' conflicts in addition to conflicts driven by more complex coalitions: it does so not only because drawing a line between the 'popular' and the 'non-popular' is not always straightforward—especially in a comparative context—but also because so many conflicts seem to have been driven by coalitions spanning social classes.[26] My definition also includes conflicts within the city as well as external

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[25] On the Ciompi revolt, see Chapter 1, pp. 37–8, and Chapter 3, pp. 80–6. On petitions in Verona, see Chapter 7, pp. 194–8. On Lille, Espinas, *Les origines du droit d'association*, II, 378–9.
[26] On defining popular conflict, see Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, 4–13.

conflicts between the city and outside players. From the city's point of view, there was not necessarily a great difference between the underlying axes of confrontation, because conflicts between city and prince often involved divisions within the city. Cities could, of course, be united in conflicts with a superior power, and when this was the case—as, for instance, with certain conflicts in the cities of Lille and Verona—this merits special consideration.[27] On the other hand, my definition excludes cases of conflict which did not directly touch on public issues. It is not always easy to draw a line between 'public' and 'private' in the context of a polycentric political order, but it seems legitimate to rule out those cases that were not ostensibly about the organization of the city. I have, therefore, excluded civil law disputes, such as property and inheritance conflicts between individuals, or cases of violence, such as brawls or *vendette*, when there was no visible public dimension. It is, however, clear that such cases could have repercussions in the public domain, or might be used by political actors to hide more substantial claims. When this was the case (and when it is also evident to the modern historian) they have been included in my sample.[28]

THE URBAN BELTS OF
LATE MEDIEVAL EUROPE

At the centre of this investigation are the cities of Northern and Central Italy and the Southern Low Countries. According to the computations of Jan de Vries, these two regions, alongside the area around Naples, were the most urbanized parts of Europe in 1500. Italy generally had more large cities than the Low Countries, but, as Wim Blockmans has shown, this gap progressively narrowed over the late Middle Ages.[29] The presence of several large and middle-sized cities make these two regions a useful focus of enquiry, because it is in such cities that particularly strong manifestations of polycentric forms of political organization can be found. Even so, it should be stressed that there is a considerable variation of size within the sample of the six cities which

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[27] For the links between these types of revolt, see also Boone and Prak, 'Rulers, Patricians and Burghers', 99–101.

[28] On the conceptual distinctness of *vendetta*, see Zorzi, 'La cultura della vendetta'; but for the difficulties in drawing such distinctions, see Chittolini, 'The "Private", the "Public", the State'.

[29] De Vries, *European Urbanization*, 158–61; Blockmans, 'Les pouvoirs publics', 66–9; Chittolini, 'Paysages urbains', 504–7. For overviews on the patterns of urbanization in either region, see Ginatempo and Sandri, *L'Italia delle città*, 195–222; Stabel, *Dwarfs among Giants*, 19–43.

I have studied for this book.[30] This focus on large and middling cities does not deny the relevance of smaller cities—whether in Italy and the Southern Low Countries, or indeed in less densely urbanized regions. However, the degree of polycentricity in such cities was necessarily different, and while they would still merit consideration within this conceptual framework this sort of analysis lies beyond the scope of this study.[31]

In many ways, comparing cities in these two regions is not an obvious exercise, and so it is not surprising that historians have only turned to engaging in systematic comparison between them in recent times.[32] In political terms, the most striking difference concerns the independence or wide-reaching autonomy of communes in Northern and Central Italy, which transformed the peninsula's map between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In the Southern Low Countries, cities acquired their autonomy more slowly and, at any rate, never became fully independent: only Ghent, in certain periods of the fourteenth century, ever achieved what might arguably be considered a degree of independence. However, for a number of reasons, these differences should not be exaggerated. First, by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, most Italian communes had been swallowed up into larger regional states and lost their independence, although they were often able to preserve considerable levels of autonomy. Only a few Italian cities, most notably Florence and Venice, also retained their formal independence and headed larger regional states to which several cities as well as other territories were subject. Second, in both regions most cities, including those cities which were part of larger territorial states, had some form of communal or municipal organization to which varying levels of the population, though usually a fairly restricted number, had access. Furthermore, cities in either region possessed the guilds, neighbourhoods, and other political units which so characterized medieval European cities and through which city dwellers could participate in urban public life.

[30] It is notoriously difficult to estimate the size of urban populations in medieval Europe. On a purely indicative basis, the following figures have been computed for the cities studied in this book, although partly on the basis of different methodologies (brackets indicate the year referred to): Florence, *c.*40,000 (1400); Bologna, *c.*30,000 (1400); Verona, *c.*20,000 (1409); Tournai, *c.*30,000 (1450); Liège, *c.*25,000 (1450); Lille, *c.*12,000 (1450). Verona's population may have temporarily fallen in the following decades. The figures have been taken from Ginatempo and Sandri, *L'Italia delle città*, 81, 85, 109; Stabel, 'Composition et recomposition des réseaux urbains', 58.
[31] Chittolini, ' "Quasi-città" '; Stabel, *Dwarfs among Giants*, 90–2. On conflict in smaller towns, Dyer, 'Small-Town Conflict'.
[32] Crouzet-Pavan and Lecuppre-Desjardin, *Villes de Flandre et d'Italie*; Carlier and Soens, *Household in Late Medieval Cities*; Cauchies and Chittolini, *Milano e Borgogna*; Van der Wee, *Rise and Decline of Urban Industries*. See, however, the older book by Lestocquoy, *Aux origines de la bourgeoisie*.

In these respects, even city-based lordships (signorie) in Italy have been shown to differ less from communes than an older historiography has assumed. The crucial insight emerging from the vast scholarly literature on this subject is that there were many different kinds of political configurations with varying levels of autonomy and diverse kinds of political cultures. In this respect, rather than only focusing on differences between Italy and the Southern Low Countries as a whole, it may also be helpful to deal with the variety of political realities within either region.[33]

Two aspects of political organization were arguably more distinct in these two regions and influenced the dynamics of political conflict. First, Italian cities generally exercised a more consolidated control over their contado (the territories subject to urban authority) than did their counterparts in the Southern Low Countries. In that region, only a few cities ruled over a usually smaller hinterland, which in Flanders was known as *kwartier*, and they did so through a variety of instruments that often fell short of full jurisdiction. However, this picture has to be considerably nuanced, because there were major variations between Italian cases themselves. Furthermore, as Tom Scott has argued, the jurisdictional control of Italian cities over their contadi was often far from complete, and many different modes of controlling surrounding territories were shared throughout Europe.[34] Another interesting difference concerns the presence of representative institutions on a regional level. In Northern and Central Italy, there were regional parliamentary assemblies in the duchy of Savoy, the marquisate of Monferrat, and the patriarchate of Aquileia, but such institutions were absent in this period from the states of Venice, Milan, or Florence, where different urban systems of conflict provided channels for the negotiation of grievances and political opposition. By comparison, in the almost equally urbanized Southern Low Countries, Flanders, Brabant, and the *pays* of Liège all developed assemblies of estates or other types of representative bodies.[35]

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[33] The vast historiography on this subject cannot be summarized here. Important starting points for Italy are Waley and Dean, *Italian City-Republics*; Tabacco, *Egemonie sociali e strutture del potere*; Milani, *I comuni italiani*; Jones, 'Communes and Despots'; Jones, *Italian City-State*; Chittolini, 'Introduzione'; Gamberini and Lazzarini, *Italian Renaissance State*; Lazzarini, *L'Italia degli stati territoriali*. For the Southern Low Countries, Verhulst, *Rise of Cities*; Boone, *À la recherche d'une modernité civique*; Prevenier and Boone, '"City-State" Dream'; Blockmans and Prevenier, *Promised Lands*.

[34] Chittolini, 'Paysages urbains', 509–13; Scott, *City-State in Europe*, 64–136, 214–41. For introductions to this subject, see Chittolini and Willoweit, *L'organizzazione del territorio*; Stabel, *Dwarfs among Giants*; Nicholas, *Town and Countryside*; Buylaert, *Eeuwen van ambitie*.

[35] Blockmans, 'A Typology of Representative Institutions'; Blockmans, *De volksvertegenwoordiging*, 107–27; Marongiu, *Medieval Parliaments*, 177–206.

Map I.1 Northern and Central Italy, mid-fifteenth century

I have chosen my six case studies broadly to reflect the diversity of scenarios within and across these two regions. Within Northern and Central Italy, I cover a variety of possible political configurations (Map I.1).[36] Verona was subject to Milan (1387–1404), Padua (1404–5), and Venice (1405–1797), having been ruled by the city-based signoria of the della Scala family from the mid-thirteenth century. Florence was an independent city which itself governed a territorial state of 11,000 square kilometres by the 1420s and retained an at least formally 'republican' constitution until 1531. Bologna's status shifted between communal and signorial regimes which enjoyed varying degrees of autonomy under the Papal State, interrupted by periods of independence and rule by Milan. After many fluctuations throughout the late Middle Ages, politics in Bologna only acquired a measure of stability when the city was brought more firmly under papal control with a concordat in 1447.

[36] Southern Italy would itself provide a highly interesting area of comparison, but the present state of knowledge and the altogether poorer source base have made this area a less feasible object of research within the comparative scope of this book. For an overview, Vitolo, '"In palatio communis"'.

In the Southern Low Countries, it is important to investigate a number of different cities beyond the more extensively studied Flemish-speaking parts of Flanders (Map I.2). Lille, a French-speaking city in the county of Flanders, was one of the 'capital' cities of the duke of Burgundy, who had acquired the county in 1384 and thereafter progressively extended his control over territories in the Southern Low Countries. The seat of the duke's *Chambre des Comptes* (accounting office) for his northern possessions, Lille was under the duke's especially tight control and its urban government's most important college was directly appointed by a commission nominated by him. Neighbouring Tournai, by contrast, was one of the most autonomous Northern European cities. As a privileged city under the direct jurisdiction of the king of France and an enclave in the

Map I.2 The Southern Low Countries, mid-fifteenth century

lands of the dukes of Burgundy, the urban government and other political units enjoyed far-reaching powers. The city of Liège was situated in the eponymous prince-bishopric, which was under the direct jurisdiction of the Empire, but increasingly found itself in the sphere of influence of the dukes of Burgundy, who were close allies of virtually all prince-bishops in this period. By far the largest city in the prince-bishopric, Liège enjoyed certain autonomous rights—including guild-based urban government— and was represented in the prince-bishopric's estates.

The period for which I have studied these cities in detail stretches roughly from 1370 to 1440. These dates are naturally somewhat arbitrary, but there is also a rationale for them. First, this was a crucial phase of state-building, at least for the Burgundian, Venetian, Milanese, and Florentine states to which the cities under investigation in this study were either subject or heavily exposed. As I would like to revise interpretations of political conflict which place the state at their centre, it seemed to be especially useful to study the polycentric orders of cities in such a period. Second, demographic shocks, the Hundred Years War, and civil war in France as well as intense warfare in Northern and Central Italy created relatively similar conditions and grievances in the two regions under analysis. Finally, for all the cities under investigation, this is a period for which surviving sources are relatively plentiful.

THE LOGIC OF POLITICAL CONFLICT OUTLINED

The logic underlying the conduct of political conflict in late medieval cities can be understood in different ways. First, city dwellers' actions were shaped by understandings of legitimacy and legality which were often bound up with the polycentric jurisdictional frameworks of their cities. The behaviour even of rebels was rarely merely habitual, and involved a normative element which was expressive of their aspirations for a better and more just political order.[37] Second, the logic of political conflict was also characterized by instrumental reasoning. City dwellers weighed up between different courses of action: for instance, carrying the banner of a sovereign power against one's opponents was highly confrontational, and potential rebels did well to consider whether such a practice corresponded

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[37] There is now an extensive literature in legal anthropology on the appropriation of notions of law and legality by social actors. For introductions to this subject, see Sarat, *Blackwell Companion to Law and Society*; Papendorf *et al., Understanding Law in Society*. See the interesting distinction between rules and habit in Hart, *Concept of Law*, 49–60.

to their actual ambitions or whether their actions had any chances of success. Of course, deliberately or in the heat of the moment, city dwellers often failed to act in ways that maximized their chances of success, but rebels also analysed their experiences of failure and often adapted their behaviour accordingly.[38]

Part I traces the strategies of legitimation, modes of conflict, and types of action groups which characterized the general logic of conflict in the cities studied in this book. Chapter 1 studies the various ways in which conflict could be legitimated in the context of a polycentric jurisdictional framework. City dwellers found ways to work around increasingly more sophisticated legal instruments for the prosecution of rebellion, appealed to the liberties of political institutions to justify their demands, and claimed to be acting in the name of justice in the context of theories of licit resistance. Chapter 2 discusses the modes of conflict which often crystallized around the political and legal procedures associated with the many bases of political organization inside and outside cities. City dwellers could articulate their grievances before various jurisdictional agencies through public or concealed forms of protest, bargain with each other through various constitutional mechanisms, or engage in urban warfare by appropriating military techniques borrowed from, and modelled on, competition between external powers. In Chapter 3 it will be suggested that the multiplicity of political units in these cities also provided the very bases for the formation of political action groups. Because these units offered crucial financial, legal, and military infrastructure, action groups necessarily developed out of, or around, one or more of them. Large coalitions, which were necessary for a successful revolt, also frequently relied on such pre-existing bodies and failed when they were not able to attract support across urban society.

Part II considers variations in this logic of conflict. Diverse manifestations of the polycentric order of cities encouraged late medieval city dwellers to pursue conflict in many different ways, and thereby gave rise to distinct systems of conflict, the characteristics of which will be briefly sketched in Chapter 4. In Bologna and Liège, city dwellers could form coalitions with relative ease on the basis of a rich, but highly unsettled, set of internal and external units, ranging from ecclesiastical structures to major outside political players. This meant that the city witnessed high levels of negotiation and warfare which culminated in a dense cluster of revolts (Chapter 5). In Verona and Lille, by contrast, weak guilds, parishes, and parties meant that city dwellers were left with far fewer opportunities to revolt. Both cities were also part of larger state

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[38] On instrumental reasoning and its relation with values, d'Avray, *Rationalities in History*, 14–17, 21–4, 112–45.

structures which broke internal coalitions and offered alternative forums of negotiation. Conflict was far from absent, but political actors necessarily had to engage in minor forms of protest and the use of the judicial apparatus to advance their claims (Chapter 7). In the middle of this spectrum, Florence and Tournai did see occasional revolts, but urban politics were characterized by elevated levels of constitutional bargaining owing to a dense, but relatively institutionalized, framework of guilds, parishes, and parties, in addition to a pluralist framework of state institutions (Chapter 6).

Conflict, therefore, followed observable patterns within a spectrum of readily available rationalities of political action. These were enshrined in the existing organizational structures of late medieval cities and formed part of the diverse political systems which crystallized around the negotiation of conflict. Beyond 'order' and 'disorder', conflict lay in the very nature of urban politics and manifested itself in manifold ways in different systems of conflict: conflict was never absent from any of these cities, but it appeared in such different guises that historians have sometimes overlooked its presence and its relevance to different forms of political organization, especially in apparently 'quiet' cities. Politics, therefore, revolved around conflict, and the following chapters will trace the complex logic which underlay the systems of conflict existing at the intersections of the polycentric order(s) of late medieval cities.

PART I

CONFLICT IN A POLYCENTRIC POLITICAL ORDER

1

Legitimating Political Conflict

Much of late medieval political and legal thought was highly critical of discord, and much of it was concerned with how to prevent it.[1] However, this does not detract from the fact that conflict was going on, and was recognized as such by contemporaries. In the most famous and widely circulated late medieval treatise on war, the Bolognese jurist Giovanni da Legnano (d. 1383) declared that 'it would not be wrong to say with the natural philosophers and astrologers that the world could not continue without war and with peace alone (*sine bello et cum sola pace*)'.[2] Giovanni thought of wars in a very wide sense: he identified spiritual wars between good and evil, as well as corporeal wars which were not only fought between nations and states, but which also included various other types of war, such as resistance against a superior.[3] Wars were willed by God to punish wrong-doers and restore peace, and they happened as the motions of the planets and stars affected the sensitive virtues of human beings, thereby generating affection and hatred between people and states.[4] Giovanni da Legnano suggested that because 'the motions of the celestial bodies . . . are always and necessarily active, we infer that there will necessarily be wars, having regard to the necessity of material and corporeal nature'.[5]

Contention was not only inevitable; under specific circumstances, it was also possible to justify its various manifestations. This was also true for

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[1] See Bruni, *La città divisa* for a survey on this topic from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. For introductions to the political and legal thought of this period, see Canning, *Ideas of Power*; Black, *Political Thought*; Viroli, *From Politics to Reason of State*.

[2] Giovanni da Legnano, *Tractatus de bello*, 81 (V); my translations are adapted from those of J. L. Brierly in the same volume. As Coopland has shown in 'Tree of Battles', 186–7, Giovanni da Legnano's treatise was widely available in North-Western Europe through partial incorporation in Honoré Bouvet's popular military manual *The Tree of Battles*; for Giovanni's 'readers' in the north, see Quaglioni, 'Das Publikum der Legisten', 97–8.

[3] Giovanni da Legnano, *Tractatus de bello*, 78–9 (I–II).

[4] Giovanni da Legnano, *Tractatus de bello*, 81–2, 85–90 (VI, X).

[5] Giovanni da Legnano, *Tractatus de bello*, 82 (VI).

political conflict in cities, in spite of a long tradition of European political thought which, stretching back to Aristotle, has always celebrated cities as cohesive political communities. The ways by which urban political conflict could be justified, in fact, diverge significantly from our own understanding of politics and legitimacy. The polycentric nature of late medieval politics, especially accentuated in cities, was crucial in this respect. Instead of a centralized and unitary political and legal system, cities were characterized by what anthropologists and legal scholars have called legal pluralism.[6] In late medieval cities, legal authority and the power to legitimate political actions were distributed across a wide spectrum of jurisdictional institutions. Around these crystallized diverging, although often overlapping, systems of rules which were constituted by statutes, customs, *ius comune*, canon law, as well as other legal sources. All questions concerning the legitimacy of political conflict were necessarily submerged in this highly complicated politico-normative arena. Actors understood, prioritized, and ignored the various rules enshrined in the polycentric urban order in different ways, and thus gave rise to their own diverging rationalities through which they could legitimate their engagement in political conflict. Following an important paradigmatic shift in legal studies in the last few decades, scholars have increasingly emphasized how legal cultures were never only the product of existing normative systems, but were created and recreated, as actors constructed their own arguments and languages.[7] All this meant that late medieval city dwellers were able to develop their own strategies of legitimating political conflict within the various ways in which the complex political order of cities could be understood. These strategies will be discussed in the following sections of this chapter:

- One way was to work around accusations of rebellion by appropriating and reinterpreting judicial categories. The late Middle Ages saw the development of legal theories which prosecuted conflicts as political crimes against governments, but rebels also developed ways of working around such a government-centred vision of the political order by recurring to the protection of rival governments or by disputing the applicability of criminal categories to their cases.

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[6] Anthropologists disagree on how widely to apply the epithet 'legal', but it seems defensible to adopt a broad understanding of this term in the context of medieval cities where the boundaries between 'official' law and other kinds of rules were not always clear. For important contributions to this debate, see Woodman, 'Ideological Combat'; Roberts, 'After Government'; Twining, 'Normative and Legal Pluralism'.

[7] See Suchman and Edelman, 'Legal Rational Myths'; Silbey, 'Legal Culture and Cultures of Legality'; Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures*.

- Another strategy was the appeal to, and demands for the extension of, the 'liberties' of communes, guilds, and other jurisdictional units which were involved in the city's governance. This strategy rested on an understanding of the political order as made up of multiple jurisdictional bodies in whose name city dwellers could act legitimately.

- Perhaps the most potent strategy was the claim that rebels were acting in the name of justice. When doing so, an understanding of the political order was invoked according to which the overriding aim of all political life was the promotion of justice in ways that ultimately transcended specific jurisdictions. Even legal scholars developed, and rebels sometimes eagerly followed, doctrines according to which governmental authority could be resisted if the pursuit of justice was in danger.

These various discourses of legitimation reveal two interesting socio-political characteristics of late medieval urban societies. First, 'high' legal theory and the actions of rebels did not necessarily contradict each other. Legal scholars and other thinkers frequently served the interests of governments, but even then rebels often responded in the terms originally employed by theorists to de-legitimate their actions.[8] Second, it is difficult to recognize sharply differentiable political ideologies. Rebels and their opponents did not, of course, share a similar outlook on specific social, economic, and political issues. However, as far as their approach to political and legal theory is concerned, they also co-existed and communicated within a shared political system which happened to offer several avenues for the legitimation of a large panoply of political actions. Their ideologies were, therefore, not monolithic and separate mental systems, but shifting combinations of often similar political concepts, discourses, and arguments organized and prioritized in different ways.[9] Overall, the ongoing argument about the legitimacy of conflict created a situation in which conflict was always present on the minds of city dwellers, and could often be argued for and contested at the same time. This meant that political conflict *could* at least potentially be legitimate, and was an intrinsic part of urban public debate and action.

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[8] On this issue, see also Strohm, ' "A Revelle!" ', 51–6.

[9] For this notion of ideology, Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, 47–95; for a broader treatment of ideologies in late medieval cities, Dumolyn, 'Urban Ideologies in Later Medieval Flanders'.

ACCUSING OF AND DENYING REBELLION

The late Middle Ages saw the development of a variety of increasingly sophisticated judicial categories through which rebels could be criminalized and prosecuted. Governments and their chief ideologues, many of whom were lawyers, were often behind this vision of the political order. Yet however much judicial categories sought to evoke precision, their development and application was often characterized by opportunism and expediency.[10] As far as political practice was concerned, numerous players invoked, rejected, and modified legal doctrines of rebellion which became a powerful discursive tool in the day-to-day contention characteristic of late medieval cities.[11]

Of crucial importance in this context was the edict *Declaratio quis sit rebellis*, issued by Emperor Henry VII on 2 April 1313. Henry offered a comprehensive, indeed all-encompassing, definition of rebellion, aimed at recalcitrant Italian cities which had refused to respond to the emperor's summons.

> Each and all of those are rebels and in breach of loyalty to us and the empire who, in whatever way, publicly or concealed, commit acts of infidelity or rebellion against our honour and who, in opposition to our or to the empire's prosperity, undertake anything against us or our officials by rebelling in matters that touch on their commissioned office.[12]

The significance of this edict lay not in its precision, but in its deliberate imprecision: for an action to be construed as rebellion, no specific act of violence nor even direct attacks against the emperor himself were necessary. Every form of disobedience amounted to rebellion, and contemporaries did not miss this point. Bartolo da Sassoferrato (d. 1357), in a commentary on this very passage in Henry VII's edict, wrote that 'to rebel is the same as to resist, and such resistance can happen by doing something against [authority], or by not doing [something] and by not obeying'. Rebellion, therefore, denominated any act of dissent vis-à-vis political authority, and the fame of this definition and Henry VII's edict was ensured through the inclusion of Bartolo's gloss in all standard

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[10] For this point, Ryan, 'Bartolus of Sassoferrato and Free Cities', 87–9.

[11] See Sbriccoli, *Crimen laesae maiestatis*; Cuttler, *Law of Treason and Treason Trials*; Dumolyn, 'Legal Repression of Revolts'.

[12] 'Illi omnes et singuli sunt rebelles et infideles nostri et imperii, qui quomodocunque publice vel occulte contra nostrum honorem infedelitatis vel rebellionis opera faciunt et in nostram seu imperii prosperitatem aliquid machinantur contra nos sive nostros officiales in hiis, que ad commissum eis offitium pertinent, rebellando', *Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum inde ab anno 1298 usque ad annum 1313*, II, 966–7 (CMXXXI).

editions of the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* into the early modern period: after all, as Bartolo did not fail to point out, such a definition of 'rebellion' had not been known in Roman law.[13]

The late Middle Ages saw jurists, both north and south of the Alps, busily extending and refining such notions of rebellion by developing an entire system to classify political conflicts. In Italy, many jurists expanded the concept of *crimen laesae maiestatis* from its original application in the *Lex Iulia de vi publica* (Dig. XLVIII.6) regarding attacks against the emperor and the Roman people to include undertakings against Italian city-states and even mere officers holding legal authority.[14] In France, a similar process was under way and, by the late fourteenth century, Jean Boutillier, a *conseiller pensionnaire* of Tournai, compiled the first custumal which systematically listed and distinguished, alongside cases of theft and homicide, forms of political conflict that could be categorized as criminal. According to Boutillier's typology, the notion of *lèse-majesté* only applied to general acts of disloyalty vis-à-vis the king, but a whole array of other categories of political crime were also available: *trahison* referred to treason against one's lord, *sédition* involved violently plotting with others against a lord or his people, *monopole* concerned assemblies and strikes amongst the people themselves, and *conspiration* happened when similar such assemblies were organized in opposition to a prince without aiming at his life.[15]

However, what exactly constituted a political crime and how it was conceptualized often varied from situation to situation, and from jurist to jurist. This is scarcely surprising, since jurists wrote for different masters and were prepared to mould their categories accordingly. When assessing a Florentine rebellion in 1379, Baldo degli Ubaldi (d. 1400) argued that the rebels were guilty of sedition, but could not be accused of having committed a *crimen laesae maiestatis* because Florence did not hold *maiestas*. However, in arguing this, Baldo stood in apparent contradiction to several other opinions in which he had implied that such a crime could indeed also be committed against cities.[16] In France, it was presumably political motives which drove Jean Petit (d. 1411) to extend the narrower French

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[13] 'Sciendum est quod rebellare idem est quod resistere, et hoc resistere potest fieri faciendo aliquid contra, vel non faciendo et non obediendo', Bartolo da Sassoferrato, 'Tractatus super constitutione Qui sint rebelles', fo. 104v. However, for Bartolo, resistance was not always illicit: see this chapter, pp. 34–6; Quaglioni, ' "Rebellare idem est quam resistere" '.

[14] Sbriccoli, *Crimen laesae maiestatis*, 178–85, 202–42.

[15] Jean Boutillier, *Somme rurale*, 170–3 (I.28). For Jean Boutillier, see Van Dievoet, *Jehan Boutillier*, 115–220; Cuttler, *Law of Treason and Treason Trials*, 21–2.

[16] Baldo degli Ubaldi, *Consiliorum sive responsorum*, I, fos. 18v–21r (LVIII–LIX). For Baldo's opinions on *crimen laesae maiestatis*, see Canning, *Political Thought of Baldus*, 121–3; Fredona, 'Baldus de Ubaldis on Conspiracy', 149–59.

conception of *crimen laesae maiestatis* to encompass a much wider set of offences. This may not be altogether surprising because he expressed this opinion when he was writing in 1407 to justify the murder of the duke of Orléans on behalf of the duke of Burgundy. Petit argued that the duke of Orléans had committed a *crimen laesae maiestatis*, and thereby extended the definition of this crime to include any action against 'the common weal (*la chose publique*)', including the resistance to taxation or the illicit employment of men-at-arms.[17]

   The political expediency behind this process cast a long shadow over such judicial categories. Like their frequent use as a means of strengthening the aims of governments, the application of these categories remained part of political polemic. A striking case is that of Tournai, the exceptional jurisdictional divisions of which demonstrate particularly clearly how the protagonists of conflicts could manipulate judicial categories for their own purposes. In the 1420s Tournai was embroiled in the war between the French dauphin Charles VII and the regime of Lancastrian France, led by an alliance of England and Burgundy, which effectively ruled the whole northern part of France. In June 1423, Tournai saw a guild-led revolt in the name of the dauphin Charles VII and the expulsion of the city's Burgundian supporters, and thus confirmed the city's status as Charles's only enclave in Anglo-Burgundian lands.[18] Whether this constituted an act of rebellion was open to the eye of the beholder. The Anglo-Burgundian regime in Paris quickly understood that the revolt had been aimed at a Burgundian faction within the town which controlled the urban government and favoured a rapprochement with the duke of Burgundy. It was recognized that 'the said city is not presently obedient to us' and, consequently, Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, was assigned Tournai if he was able to secure the town's obedience.[19] The dauphin Charles VII, by contrast, viewed the revolt in a different light. In 1424 he confirmed in perpetuity the significantly strengthened powers of the guilds after the revolt, and also asserted that the events of June 1423 had involved no 'inconvenience or rumour (*inconvénient ou rumeur*)'. The real rebels were not the beneficiaries of the 1423 revolt, but the Burgundians and their party, who 'by trickery, sedition, and otherwise . . . have striven and strive day by day to seduce our subjects'. The high court of the *Parlement*, which

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[17] Monstrelet, I, 218–22; For the notion of *crimen laesae maiestatis* in France, see Cuttler, *Law of Treason and Treason Trials*, 21–4; Dumolyn, 'Legal Repression of Revolts', 491–3; Chiffoleau, 'Le crime de majesté'.

[18] For a wider discussion of the external dimensions of this revolt, see Chapter 6, pp. 164–7.

[19] 'ladicte ville n'est pas pour le point obéissant', AN, J 249, no. 11; also in ADN, B 660 and published in Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 475–7.

the dauphin had set up at Poitiers, also largely refrained from prosecuting any of Tournai's alleged rebels, although we know from the notifications which the town authorities received that several exiles had filed suits with the *Parlement*.[20]

In however polemical a way, judicial concepts of political crimes were also an important part of political discourse. Ironically, the son of one of the insurgents in Tournai in 1423, Tassart Savary, even owned a copy of Boutillier's custumal.[21] There is a distinct sense that rebels also tried to appropriate and work around judicial concepts. In Tournai, for instance, the dauphin's supporters had already made their presence felt in October 1420, when the urban government and parish assemblies refused to swear allegiance to the Treaty of Troyes, which, in May of that year, had sealed the 'perpetual' union of England and France under the auspices of the Anglo-Burgundian alliance. This oath had been designed so that its tak-ers would recognize the union between England and France, and swear allegiance to the English king, Henry V, who, according to the treaty's terms, would become king of both England and France after the death of the French king, Charles VI. Those who took the oath made themselves formal *subjects* of the Lancastrian regime and could, thus, be punishable for treason—a different legal status from that of *enemies* who, accord-ing to contemporary legal theory, were not obliged to obedience to the regime and could, therefore, not be charged with treason. The Dauphinist supporters in Tournai, therefore, had every reason to be suspicious of the Treaty of Troyes and to be wary of committing themselves to a new over-lord. Invited to negotiations in Paris, the Tournai authorities only sent informal envoys, so that no office-holders could be forced to commit themselves by an official oath. In spite of several further embassies, the intervention of neighbouring towns, and even the change of mind of some Tournai citizens, a majority in favour of the oath could not be found. Tournai never submitted to the new Lancastrian regime and, when the Dauphinist groups eventually took over the urban government in June 1423 and exiled their pro-Burgundian foes, they did not, formally at any rate, commit rebellion against any allegiance sworn under the terms of the Treaty of Troyes.[22]

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[20] 'par cautelles, sédicions et autrement . . . avoient contendu et contendoient cotidi-ennement de séduire nos diz subgez', Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 508–9.

[21] 'La librairie d'un bourgeois de Tournai', 69.

[22] *TR*, I, 206, 209–16, 225–6; *Chronique*, 379–80. The treaty is in Monstrelet, III, 390–402 (the provisions on the oath are at 394–5). For the legal theory concerning the status of subjects, see Cuttler, *Law of Treason and Treason Trials*, 40–4; Sbriccoli, *Crimen laesae maiestatis*, 224–42.

In practice, a variety of responses was possible to any one political conflict. This is also true for Italy—even for a city like Verona, which, from 1405, found itself under the tight control of the Venetian state. An aborted rebellion by a few Veronese families on 12 May 1412 generated different understandings by a variety of different political players.[23] The Venetian officials in Verona quickly put down the uprising, while the Venetian government regarded the attempted rebellion as sufficiently disruptive to merit a gilt inscription on the city's principal square commemorating the event.[24] Not every Venetian magistracy accepted this view: a week after the rebellion, on 19 May 1412, the Venetian appeals court of the *Avogadori di Comun* complained to the local Venetian officials about their delay in responding to a request for information. The officials had excused themselves by arguing that 'due to the plot they had been otherwise engaged', but the *Avogadori* did not accept this argument and threatened them with a fine of 500 *lire*.[25] The commune of Verona also considered the disruption to the city's public order in different ways. One day after the uprising, on 13 May 1412, the city's principal governmental body, the *Dodici*, promptly despatched an embassy to Venice to apologize for what they played down as merely 'a wicked and disreputable act, perpetrated by a few Veronese citizens of evil disposition'.[26] However, three months later, the *Dodici* also openly played with the apparent discontent in Verona when sending another embassy to press for, among other issues, a radical reduction of the city's fiscal burden. In what may have been understood as a reference to the earlier uprising, the ambassadors were to tell the Venetian authorities that its 'subjects and servants were unhappy . . . and not as powerful as they had been' under its previous rulers.[27]

The development of judicial categories for the prosecution of political crimes did not, in fact, make it any easier to define rebellion in practice. Rather, legal theories of political crimes added a new discourse to the complex political debate in late medieval cities. Political actors from widely contrasting backgrounds showed themselves highly adaptive, and

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[23] For this rebellion, see Chapter 7, pp. 183–4.

[24] ASVen, Dieci, Deliberazioni miste, 11, fo. 135v.

[25] 'diversimodo occupato propter novitatem', ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Lettere, 666/2: 5 May 1412. The Venetian officials in Verona, clearly using the plot as an excuse initially, continued to refuse to hand over the information and were eventually fined: ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Lettere, 666/2: 19 May 1412, 22 August 1412, January 1413, 18 December 1413, 28 March 1414; ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Raspe, 3646/6, pt. II, fos. 5r–6r.

[26] 'pro condolendo de tam nefario et flagitioso actu, perpetrato ab aliquibus male mentis civibus Veronensis', ASVer, AAC, 56, fo. 202v.

[27] 'subditi et servitores vestri male sunt contenti de guerra presenti . . . non sunt ita potentes sicut soliti erant', ASVer, AAC, 56, fos. 206v–207r, 209r–209v (at 209r).

appropriated and reinterpreted the judicial vocabulary for their own purposes.

INVOKING LIBERTY

Cries for greater 'liberty' are amongst the most characteristic slogans of urban rebels in the late Middle Ages, and an indication of another strategy of legitimation. Although a term with several possible meanings, 'liberty' was often closely associated with a particular understanding of the political order which acknowledged the existence of multiple jurisdictions, each of which possessed different degrees of legitimate authority— whether they were communes or other legally recognized institutions. Innumerable medieval charters referred to such jurisdictions as possessing 'liberties', 'franchises', and 'privileges'. The 'liberties' of jurisdictional institutions were not necessarily distinct from those of individuals: as Quentin Skinner has shown, many political thinkers in the late Middle Ages and the early modern period linked individual and collective forms of liberty.[28] Within a polycentric political framework, demands to re-balance institutions by strengthening, weakening, or reconfiguring their powers could be construed as legitimate requests. It is no surprise that insurgents invoked jurisdictions in their cries of battle, such as 'Long live the people and the guilds'[29] or 'Long live the king, down with the *commis* [of the guilds], up with the deans [of the guilds], and free the prisoners'[30].

On a heuristic basis, rebels could be seen as invoking two distinct meanings of liberty. On the one hand, liberty could refer to a jurisdiction's powers to pass statutes, elect officials, and fulfil particular judicial roles—all those competences which came with the institution's liberties, franchises, and privileges. On the other hand, the term could also be invoked to mean independence from other jurisdictions and freedom from the encroachment of external agencies. These two meanings of liberty could, of course, be linked—as indeed they were, according to Skinner, in the 'republican' or 'neo-Romanist' tradition of political thought. Of the cities studied in this book, Florentine ideologues most persistently invoked such a broad concept of liberty. In his *Laudatio florentinae urbis* (*c.*1403–4), the Florentine chancellor Leonardo Bruni

[28] Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism*, 23–6, 36–46.
[29] 'Viva il popolo et le arti', *Corpus*, 470–1 (Bologna, 1399).
[30] 'Vive le roi, les commis jus, les doiens supz et les prisonniers délivrez', *Chronique*, 403 (Tournai, 1428).

famously praised Florence for both its communal constitution and for
the liberty the city enjoyed from outside powers.[31] In most cities, how-
ever, city dwellers navigated and re-calibrated these conceptions of lib-
erty in complex ways. In the most radical revolts they did indeed invoke
both conceptions of liberty. Most of the time, however, rebels were
quite willing to compromise especially on the latter type of liberty: as
long as communes, guilds, or other jurisdictions were acknowledged,
they were often surprisingly ready to accept the authority of superior
jurisdictions. At any rate, city dwellers were bound to disagree about
these matters and, like the discourse of rebellion, strife over the pre-
cise understanding of liberty was itself an expression of urban political
conflict.[32]

   An example for the invocation of 'liberty' in its most encompassing
meaning is Bologna's revolt against its papal legate in 1376. In March of
that year, an insurgent coalition, which included the city's main parties,
guilds, and a body attached to the university, occupied the city square,
effectively threw the papal legate Noëllet out of Bologna, and recreated
the commune of Bologna largely independent of the Papal State. At least
some of the rebels aspired to achieving independence: after all, they pro-
claimed 'the state of the *popolo* and of liberty (*stato popolare e di libertà*)',
and carried a banner with the inscription *Libertas* which had been handed
to them by Florence.[33] At the same time, the insurgent coalition was par-
ticularly interested in enhancing the liberties positively held by the com-
mune of Bologna itself. Immediately after the revolt, on 21 March 1376,
bells were rung to convene the citizens of Bologna. A prominent lawyer,
Riccardo da Saliceto, addressed this assembly in both Latin and Italian,
and explained that, in the absence of a governor, the citizens needed to
make their own provisions. Expressly stating that the jurisidictional rights
of other parties would not be infringed, the assembly proceeded to charge
Riccardo with the defence of the city and elected sixteen officials (*antiani
et consules*) to whom it delegated full legal authority (*merum et liberum
arbitrium et omnimodam potestam et bayliam*), jointly to be held with other
communal institutions created by them, for the months of March and
April. In the following months, this led to thorough institutional reforms,

   [31] Bruni, 'Laudatio florentinae urbis', esp. 245–6, 251–2, 260; see Baron, *Crisis of the
Early Italian Renaissance*, 418–30; Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism*, 17–57.
   [32] See, for instance, the different meanings of 'liberty' in the political discourses of
Florence and Genoa, as discussed in Ferente, 'Guelphs!'.
   [33] *Corpus*, 314. For this revolt, see Chapter 5, pp. 125–6; Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*.
For the shifting of meaning of *libertà* in Bologna, see De Benedictis, 'Lo "stato popolare di
libertà"'.

such as an overhaul of the colleges and councils of the commune as well as the redaction of new statutes for the city.[34]

The rebels' position was, however, not uncontentious and their claims of liberty were themselves subject to intense, and often polemical, debate. Giovanni da Legnano, himself a prominent inhabitant of Bologna and a papal supporter, wrote an entire treatise against the rebels by asserting the pope's established right to rule the city, and accused the rebels of having not only committed a *crimen laesae maiestatis*, but also offended against divine law, natural law, the law of nations (*ius gentium*), canon law, as well as the constitutions of the Papal State.[35] The pope was, after all, the just ruler of Bologna for a number of reasons, as had also been confirmed most recently by Emperor Rudolf of Habsburg's donation of Bologna to the papacy in 1278.[36] The Bolognese rebels, Giovanni charged in his polemic, were not acting in the interest of liberty. Bolognese citizens had already possessed liberty, since they were not subject to slavery, a reference to the distinction drawn between freedom and slavery in Roman Law (Dig. I.4–6). True liberty of reason could only be achieved if one obeyed the laws of a good ruler. Not being subject to such laws amounted to slavery, and it is to this vile condition that the Bolognese had been reduced after their revolt against the papal legate. As Giovanni remarked repeatedly in his treatise, the rebels' true slogan, in fact, was not 'Long live liberty (*Vivat libertas*)', but 'Death to liberty and long live slavery (*Moriatur libertas et vivat servitus*)'.[37]

Demands for liberty did not necessarily entail demands for freedom from superior jurisdictions. Arguably, rebels almost always hoped to extend the powers of specific institutions, but were quite willing to negotiate the extent of their liberty from external encroachments. This was also true for what was arguably one of late medieval Europe's most radical rebel movements, the so-called Hédroits of Liège. In September 1406, they shook off the rule of Prince-Bishop John of Bavaria and took over the government of the city. In one sense, they clearly rejected the

[34] ASB, Provvigioni in capreto, 1, fos. 1r–3v; published in *Gli statuti del comune di Bologna*, lxxi–lxxviii. On the constitutional changes, see Valeria Braidi's introduction in *Gli statuti del comune di Bologna*, lxxxix–cxxiv; Bosdari, 'Il comune di Bologna'.

[35] Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, Lat. V, 16 (2653: Giovanni da Legnano: 'Tractatus de iuribus ecclesiae'), fos. 10v–11r. Parts of the manuscript are published in Giovanni da Legnano, *Dagli scritti inediti giuridico-politici*, 25–59. For this treatise, see also Gooden, *Papal Authority and Canon Law*, 174–222.

[36] Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. V, 16 (2653: Giovanni da Legnano, 'Tractatus de iuribus ecclesiae'), fos. 1r–10v.

[37] Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. V, 16 (2653: Giovanni da Legnano, 'Tractatus de iuribus ecclesiae'), fos. 13r–14v, 21r.

prince-bishop's authority: claiming that he had acted against the 'privileges, franchises, and old customs (*privilèges, franchises et anciens usages*)' of the city, the Hédroits elected a new bishop and a *mambour* (governor). At the same time, they were at pains to receive recognition from other authorities, as they sought and obtained approval for their regime from both (the deposed) Emperor Wenceslas and (the Avignonese) Pope Benedict XIII in 1407. In the charter sealing the election of a new bishop and *mambour*, the Hédroits were also keen on pointing out that they had made these elections not out of a disregard for superior authority, but because the *pays* of Liège had allegedly found itself 'without a head and without a defender (*senz tiest et sans defenseur*)' after the prince-bishop had left the city. It was only for this reason that the rebels had been forced to turn to the city's old chronicles whence they had learnt that 'anciently the people [themselves] elected their prelate (*d'anchienneteit à pueple dependoit la election de leur prelas*)'.[38] The Hédroits, in a way, even closely matched the provisions of the prince-bishopric's most important custumal manual, the late fourteenth-century *Patron de la temporalité du pays de Liège*, which stated that 'no country can govern itself during peace or war without a lord or sovereign, no less than the body can exist without a head'.[39]

Even the Bolognese rebels of 1376 were keen to stress that they had not violated any jurisdictional rights of their superior. As early as April 1376 the new urban government despatched the civil lawyer and university lecturer Giacomo Preunti to appear before a trial set up by the papal legate in the neighbouring city of Ferrara. Naturally, Preunti denied all the charges and argued that the commune had never rebelled against the Papal State. It had always intended to obey the pope, but, since the legate had left the city, the Bolognese simply had to form their own government in order to safeguard peace in the city and prevent it from falling into 'the hands of tyrants (*in manibus tirannorum*)'. Preunti could not refrain from using a lawyer's trick by contesting the legitimacy of the trial itself, as it took place in Ferrara, outside the legate's jurisdiction, and without papal authorization. He was also at pains to point out that nobody had harmed the legate and that any abuses would be investigated by the commune.[40] As it turned out, the Bolognese commune—by then under the control of a different coalition— was willing, with the mediation of Giovanni da Legnano, to submit to

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[38] The charter is published in *LR*, III, 91–4; see also Stavelot, 104–5, 107; Stavelot (*lat.*), 109–10. For this revolt and its repercussions, see Chapter 5, pp. 104, 119–20, 128.

[39] 'Nul paiis ne soie puet, en tranquilliteit, governeir, ne en fait de guerre, sens aulcun sangnour ou souverain, nient plus que ly corps sens chief', Jacques de Hemricourt, 'Patron de la temporalité du pays de Liège', 53–5 (at 53). For *mambour* elections, see Chapter 2, pp. 51–2.

[40] Published in Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 79–82.

the pope by July 1377 in return for generous jurisdictional concessions to the newly-established commune.[41] Successive regimes in Bologna continued the drive towards extending the liberties of the commune. From 1393 special reform commissions, tellingly known as *Riformatori dello Stato di Libertà*, were appointed to advance political reforms for the commune and to strengthen its political standing both internally and vis-à-vis the papacy. Although this institution could at times—such as in 1416, 1431, or 1438—become an issue of contention with the pope, the *Riformatori* fundamentally co-existed with papal rule in the city. The *capitula* between Pope Nicholas V and Bologna in 1447, which resolved long-standing tensions between the city and the papacy, even made the *Riformatori* joint rulers of the city together with the papal legate.[42]

Cries for greater liberty were rarely straightforward: they usually referred to complex jurisdictional arrangements, many of which were only negotiated as political conflicts developed. The extent of the liberties held by any one political unit was an object of major contention, but disagreement about it was an ordinary feature of the complex jurisdictional structure of late medieval cities.

INVOKING JUSTICE

Arguably the most powerful strategy for the legitimation of political conflict was the claim that rebels were acting in the name of justice. This strategy was expressive of a conception of the political order according to which the purposes of government reached beyond the immediate powers of particular rulers. Alongside values such as the common good, the provision of justice was seen as an ideal towards which all political activity should aspire. In a long tradition of political thought, a *duplex ordo* was seen as governing the world, the aspiration of which was both to ensure the earthly well-being and peaceful security of the community, and to enable the collectivity to please God and to live a life of moral virtue.[43]

Even jurists, although normally employed in the defence of states, developed doctrines of justice which transcended the authority of rulers. A case in point is the conception of the public order put forward by medieval jurists in arguments building on the Digest's *Lex Iulia de vi publica*

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[41] Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 99–115; *Codex diplomaticus dominii temporalis S. Sedis*, II, 599.

[42] De Benedictis, 'Lo "stato popolare di libertà"', 906–14; Tamba, *Il regime del popolo e delle arti*, 29–68, 117–32; *I Riformatori dello Stato di Libertà*, I, 13–26.

[43] Kempshall, *Common Good*, 76–129; for the rhetoric of the common good in political practice, see the contributions in Lecuppre-Desjardin and Van Bruaene, *De Bono Communi*.

(Dig. XLVIII.6), a provision which, as we have seen, lay at the basis of much theorizing about political conflicts, as it dealt with cases of illicit 'public force', predominantly involving cases of sedition, homicide, or rape. It is interesting, however, that medieval commentators appear also to have been interested in a relatively small section of the law (borrowed from Ulpian) which regarded the denial of justice as an offence against the public order. One of the earliest commentators expanding on this was the judge Bonifacio Antelmi (previously identified as Bonifacio Vitalini) who wrote his *Tractatus de maleficiis* some time at the beginning of the four-teenth century. While Bonifacio's list of eleven offences against the public order also contained cases of straightforward violence, the majority of his provisions involved questions of justice. For Bonifacio the prevention of just sentences, influencing judges to alter their judgements, magistrates acting against public law, judges unfairly refusing the appeal of sentences, and impeding judgements were all cases that disrupted the public order in the same way in which armed assemblies could do. Justice, in this light, could also exist beyond what governments claimed it to be—indeed, gov-ernments themselves posed a risk to the public order when they did not administer justice fairly.[44]

For both theorists and 'practitioners', the denial of justice could serve as a justification for resistance. Building on a tradition of interpretation of the *Tres libri Codicis* reaching back to the twelfth century, late medieval jurists developed a long-lasting tradition of *Widerstandsrecht.* In his com-mentary on the *Lex prohibitum* and the *Lex devotum* of the Codex (X.1.5 and XII.40.5), Bartolo da Sassoferrato specifically allowed the rejection of governmental authority if an official carried out his duties against the interests of justice (*iniuste*), or if soldiers committed acts of injustice by, for instance, breaking agreements on billeting or by defiling property. Evidently close to the practical needs of resisting subjects, Bartolo clearly explained the circumstances under which friends and neighbours could be called for support, and even specified the words (*Succurrite, succurrite*) to shout in such a situation. We shall see in Chapter 2 that the same passages of Roman Law were also used by Giovanni da Legnano to justify warfare against one's own prince. As Angela De Benedictis has shown, these two passages were upheld and extended by legal commentators throughout the early modern period and also proved important in Northern Europe during the Reformation.[45]

[44] Bonifacio Vitalini (Antelmi), 'Tractatus de maleficiis', 371–3 (*Ad legem Iuliam de vi publica*); on Vitalini, see Maffei, 'Profilo di Bonifacio Ammanati'.
[45] Bartolo da Sassoferrato, *Tres Codicis libros commentaria*, fos. 7v (X.1.5), 86v–87r (XII.40.5). For this tradition of interpretation, see De Benedictis, 'Rebellion – Widerstand'; Conte, '"De iure fisci"'.

Bartolo was also a protagonist in the debate on tyranny in the context of which lawyers and theologians had formulated rationales for resistance— although it should be stressed that they ultimately often rated obedience higher, were not very concrete about the circumstances of resistance, or contradicted themselves.[46] The theme of tyranny had been developed by theorists such as John of Salisbury (d. 1180) and Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and had an important influence on a variety of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century thinkers, both north and south of the Alps.[47] Particularly important for the regions under investigation in this study were the contributions of Jean Petit and Coluccio Salutati (d. 1406), which were disseminated in letters and pamphlets sent around numerous cities in France and Italy. Petit's views were expounded in his widely publicized defence of the murder of the duke of Orléans in 1407, and Salutati's in Florence's propaganda against 'tyrannical' Milan during its war with Giangaleazzo Visconti in the last decade of the fourteenth century.[48] Bartolo's argument is of particular interest for our purposes, since his treatise on tyranny also circulated widely in North-Western Europe.[49] Justice played an important role in Bartolo's conceptualization of tyranny, because, like some other writers on this subject, he defined a tyrant, in a formulation borrowed from Pope Gregory the Great, as someone who 'does not rule by law (*non iure principatur*)'.[50] On the basis of an earlier well-known categorization by Aquinas, Bartolo distinguished between two types of tyrants: first, tyrants 'by defect of title (*ex defectu tituli*)' who had usurped their office; second, tyrants 'by conduct (*ex parte exercitii*)' whose actions 'do not further the common good, but only benefit the tyrant himself'.[51] Both Aquinas and Bartolo agreed that the authority of a tyrant 'by defect of title' could be rejected unless the usurping tyrant sought later legitimation. A comparable fate also awaited tyrants 'by conduct' who could, or even should, be similarly disobeyed (Aquinas) or deposed (Bartolo). By acting unfairly, the tyrant kept the city

[46] For the complexity of Bartolo's thought in this respect, see Ryan, 'Bartolus of Sassoferrato and Free Cities', 86–7; Quaglioni, ' "Rebellare idem est quam resistere" ', 40–3.

[47] John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, esp. 206–13 (VIII.20–21); Aquinas, *S. Thomae opera omnia*, VI, 787–8 (*Scripta super libros sententiarum*, II, dist. XLIV, quaest. II, art. II).

[48] For Petit, Monstrelet, I, 178–242; Coville, *Jean Petit*, esp. 179–206. For Salutati, see his 'De tyranno'; Baron, *Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance*, 146–66.

[49] For instance, through partial incorporation of the *Tractatus de tyranno* in the *Somnium Viridarii*, 163–70 (I.133) and the *Songe du Vergier*, 217–31 (I.131). See also Quaglioni, 'Das Publikum der Legisten', 99–100; Feenstra, 'Bartole dans les Pays-Bas', 238–9; Paradisi, 'La diffusione europea', 449–50.

[50] Bartolo da Sassoferrato, 'Tractatus de tyranno', 184.

[51] 'Opera eius non tendunt ad bonum comune, sed proprium ipsius tyranni', Bartolo, 'Tractatus de tyranno', 196; the distinctions between the two categories are discussed on 185–202.

in a state of permanent division and this, according to Bartolo, prevented him from delivering fair judgements, thus leading to a breach of the *Lex Iulia de vi publica*.[52] In his treatise on tyranny, Bartolo implied that it should be left to superior jurisdictions, such as the emperor or the pope, to depose tyrants, but in another treatise he suggested that, under particular conditions, even political parties could legitimately resist tyrannical governments.[53]

Such legal theories fuelled, but also partly reflected, the use of the discourse of tyranny in political practice. As is argued in Chapter 6, this played an especially important role in Florence during the ascendancy of the Albizzi party, but another instructive case is that of Verona, where it was used for varying political effects to de-legitimate, or at least to challenge, the powers of the city's overlords.[54] In the summer of 1405, Verona threw out its then rulers—the Carrara family of Padua—and submitted to the jurisdiction of Venice. At a formal ritual of submission on Saint Mark's Square, the ambassadors of Verona allegedly justified their actions by telling the Venetian doge that they had shaken off the 'yoke of tyranny (*iugo tyrannidis*)' to take flight in the 'residence and castle of liberty (*domicilium et arcem libertatis*)' of Venice.[55] The doge at this point responded, quoting Isaiah (IX.2): 'The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light'.[56] However, the Venetians soon saw the argument of tyranny being used against them. After a harsh salt tax was imposed on Verona in 1414, breaking an earlier agreement, the Veronese promptly dispatched ambassadors to point out to the Venetian Senate that the city's previous rulers had been less harsh, and to implore the Venetians 'not to engage in this inhumane act which only tyrants would commit'.[57] In 1442, during a period of worsening relations between Verona and Venice, protest against another type of tax led to protesters putting up a notice on a column in the courtyard of the palace of the podestà, one of the Venetian officials in

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[52] Bartolo, 'Tractatus de tyranno', 202–5; Aquinas, *S. Thomae opera omnia*, VI, 787–8 (*Scripta super libros sententiarum*, II, dist. XLIV, quaest. II, art. II). Aquinas also argued that those who opposed tyranny were not guilty of sedition unless such resistance would cause greater disorder than the tyrant himself: Aquinas, *S. Thomae Aquinatis doctoris angelici opera omnia*, VIII, 321 (*Summa theologiae*, IIa IIae, quaest. XLII, art. II); but for an argument stressing the far-reaching duty of subjects to obey, see Aquinas, *S. Thomae Aquinatis doctoris angelici opera omnia*, IX, 389–91 (*Summa theologiae*, IIa IIae, quaest. CIV, art. V).

[53] Bartolo da Sassoferrato, 'Tractatus de guelfis et gebellinis', 137–40; see Chapter 3, p. 69.

[54] See Chapter 6, pp. 145–6. For revolts against tyrants, see also Maire-Vigueur, 'Le rivolte cittadine contro i "tiranni" '.

[55] Sabellico, *Rerum venetarum ab urbe condita*, fo. 121v.

[56] 'Populus, qui ambulabat in tenebris, vicit [sic] lucem magnam', Sanudo, col. 823.

[57] 'non facere illam inhumanitatem, quam tiranj voluerint facere', ASVen, Senato, Misti, 50, fo. 153v.

Verona, threatening that the 'tyranny' of the taxes would leave the podestà without friends.[58]

   Such accusations were not only formulae which could be used to threaten or disobey governments. Behind their invocation were real grievances about justice which lay at the heart of many revolts and affected the various political units of cities. This was most evident in rebels' frequent complaints about the administration of civil and penal justice in their cities, whether this concerned corrupt judges, particular judicial practices, or specific jurisdictional arrangements.[59] In Liège, complaints about the allegedly unfair administration of justice by courts connected to the prince-bishop or the urban government led to major wars between city and bishop or within the city itself in the mid-1370s, 1386, 1395, 1403, and 1406.[60] In the 1390s and early 1400s, there were particularly intense conflicts over the activities of the bishop's summary court of the *Anneau du Palais*, the assertive jurisdiction of which provoked the resistance of Liège and neighbouring cities which saw their privileges infringed. Following earlier precedents, the prince-bishop abandoned Liège after the escalation of conflicts in October 1395 and September 1402. However, it is a measure of the interest of both sides in a working judicial system that, within a relatively short time, the cities and the bishop signed treaties—the Peaces of Caster (December 1395) and Tongeren (August 1403)—which negotiated the re-establishment of episcopal jurisdiction under certain conditions. These included specific regulations on the number of procurators employed in episcopal courts, the requirement for defendants to be charged with their offences, and quicker judicial procedures for cases involving offences of less than thirty *livres*. In 1406 a similar dispute, which could not be resolved in this way, led to the revolt of the Hédroits, who went on to run their own judicial system until they were defeated in 1408.[61]

   Concerns about justice also lay at the heart of the Ciompi revolt of Florence (July 1378), as revealed by the petitions which the insurgents drew up on the first day of the uprising.[62] Many of the grievances mentioned in the petition of the city's workers, the most prominent participants, were related to the administration of justice in the city: the practice

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   [58] ASVer, AAC, 58, fos. 153r–153v.
   [59] See also Zorzi, 'Politiche giudiziarie e ordine pubblico'.
   [60] See Chapter 2, pp. 51–2; Chapter 5.
   [61] *LO*, 373–5, 379–99. For the context on these peace treaties, Outremeuse, 230–1; Stavelot, 17–19, 97–8; Stavelot (*lat.*), 98, 103, 105; *CRJB*, 151–7; Zantfliet, cols. 344–5, 358, 361–2; *1402*, 428; *LR*, II, 109–12, 115–18, III, 81–8. For the *Anneau du Palais*, Vrancken, 'Aspects institutionnels du pouvoir souverain'.
   [62] For the petitions and a wider discussion of the revolt, see Chapter 3, pp. 80–6.

of cutting off the right hand of debtors who were unable to pay a penalty fee within ten days was to be discontinued; no members of the *popolo minuto*, the city's unenfranchised workers and artisans, were to be arrested within the coming two years on account of debt, obligations, promises, or contracts; the foreign official of the wool guild was to be deprived of his office, and his position was to be abolished; the abuse of proscriptions (*ammonizioni*) by the Parte Guelfa was denounced and an overhaul of the Parte was demanded; all exile sentences were to be cancelled; the denunciation of magnates was to be restored to the status of regulations prior to earlier reforms; and an amnesty was demanded for any crimes committed since 18 June, when political protests had first become violent in the city. Inevitably, these demands reflected not only complaints against specific judicial practices, but also concerns about the very jurisdictional apparatus through which justice was exercised. A number of different jurisdictions were under attack: the city's three judicial agencies (the podestà, *Capitano del Popolo*, and *Esecutore degli Ordinamenti di Giustizia*), the wool guild's own tribunal, the Parte Guelfa, as well as the commune itself. The insurgents also directed their violence towards specific targets relevant to these demands.[63] They conquered the palace of the wool guild as well as that of the grain official, where they burnt all the records. They violently entered and sacked the palaces of the city's three judicial agencies, although the chroniclers stress that, because the podestà was willing to give up his palace voluntarily, he was spared from being attacked personally. One judicial official, ser Nuto da Città di Castello, was not so lucky: while he was trying to escape, he was spotted by a young boy, captured by armed bands of shearers, and brought to the city's main square where he was hit so violently on the head that he died. The rebels, however, made sure not to be perceived as engaging in anarchical violence. They imitated a well-known ritual of justice, usually reserved for traitorous military captains, when they then hanged ser Nuto upside down and brought his body parts to various districts in the city.[64]

The insurgents of Liège and the Ciompi rebels of Florence had a very clear sense of what justice meant to them. They clearly felt that their indignation empowered them, or could provide the justification for empowering them, to act in the name of justice and, when necessary, to bring down tyranny. In the mid-fourteenth century, the Liège chronicler Jean de Hocsem had explained his people's propensity to revolt by pointing out that they were simply not willing to accept unjust government (*injusta*

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[63] Falletti-Fossati, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi*, 365–76.
[64] *Diario*, 367–9; *Tumulto*, 75–6 (Squittinatore), 112 (Compagnano), 142 (Lettera d'anonimo).

imperia).[65] This readiness to act was, in fact, rooted in the opportunities which the polycentric political order offered to city dwellers to legitimate their actions. Their strategies of legitimation were the stuff of urban politics, whether in secret negotiations or outright revolt: arguing about rebellion in shifting contexts of authority; disagreeing about the extent of jurisdictional liberties in a multi-jurisdictional environment; and clamouring for justice within a political order that could be seen as transcending the responsibilities of rulers. However distrusted and maligned conflict may have been, it could be argued for as an ordinary facet of political life. Justifiable in so many ways, it could ultimately be defended as a legitimate feature of this political system.

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[65] Jean de Hocsem, *La chronique*, 15–16; drawing heavily on Aristotle and Vegetius, Jean de Hocsem also provides a climatic and medical explanation for the willingness of the Liégeois to fight.

2

Modes of Conflict

Concerns about legitimacy, indeed legality, also extended to the modes of conflict which city dwellers developed over time. Many ways of protesting, negotiating, and engaging in violence took inspiration from practices embedded in the politics of their cities. As one of their professed aims was the restoration of justice, it may have seemed natural for rebels to display an almost legalistic concern with ideas and procedures associated with legal and jurisdictional frameworks, although these were often reinterpreted, manipulated, or even misunderstood.[1] Perhaps the clearest example for this, well-known for Italy and awaiting further study for the Southern Low Countries, was the use of bans and banishments for the elimination of political exiles. The legal veneer under which such sentences were imposed cannot be stressed enough. Bans followed established patterns involving a clearly-specified number of summons and judicial procedures. In a similarly legalistic way, sentences of confinement stipulated precisely designated places of exile or the radius around the city which exiles were not supposed to enter, and often laid down in great detail the consequences for other family members, restrictions on property ownership, or limitations on entering marriages.[2]

It has often been assumed that legal procedures made conflicts more 'orderly'. However, legal anthropologists and historians have shown in recent decades that a concern about the law did not necessarily reduce levels of conflict. Legal channels often merely provided a forum for the conduct of disputes, constituted a tactical device, and anyway worked

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[1] On legalism as an analytical category, see Dresch, 'Legalism, Anthropology, and History', although he uses the concept only in relation to clearly formulated rules; for these ideas in a late medieval European context, Lantschner, 'Justice Contested and Affirmed'.

[2] Milani, *L'esclusione dal comune*, 249–375; Ricciardelli, *Politics of Exclusion*, 7–57; Starn, *Contrary Commonwealth*, 67–76; Baxendale, 'Exile in Practice'. In the Southern Low Countries forced pilgrimages represented comparable legal instruments of expulsion: see Boone, 'Mécanismes de contrôle social'; van Herwaarden, *Opgelegde bedevaarten*.

alongside other strategies, including the use of physical force.[3] In any case, a concern with law and jurisdiction also extended to forms of conflict which did not involve any courts. Medieval historians have emphasized that violence could itself be legitimated within existing legal frameworks. In her recent work on thirteenth-century France, Hannah Skoda has drawn attention to how violence could be justified within several different 'grammars of violence' that stemmed from the 'normalizing framework' of the law, alongside other discourses such as hagiography, sermons, medical thinking, and literature.[4]

It is best to think of the various practices of conflict as constituting a repertoire within the meanings and rationales of which city dwellers thought and acted.[5] Three modes of conflict can roughly be distinguished, and are discussed consecutively in the following sections of this chapter. Needless to say, any such distinction can only be heuristic: in practice, these modes often overlapped and practices from one mode of conflict were also used in others. Nor were all forms of conflict only or exclusively shaped by the various ways in which city dwellers understood the legal and jurisdictional context; however, because this context usually did matter, it can provide a useful framework within which to discuss the various ways in which conflict could manifest itself.

- One mode of conflict was protest, when city dwellers made particular claims or articulated specific demands before one or several of a city's jurisdictional agencies. This could take the form of a public assembly and petitions, often by groups organized around existing jurisdictional institutions such as communes or guilds. However, city dwellers sometimes needed to resort to less public forms of protest. Some of these could manifest themselves in rather concealed ways, but there was also often the possibility of articulating grievances through judicial channels: plaintiffs and defendants alike could use apparently un-political court cases to advance their political causes and play off rival power brokers.

- Constitutional bargaining involved direct negotiations between rival political groups through the several constitutional mechanisms that were available in urban arenas: elections, consultative, legislative,

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[3] See, for instance, Wickham, *Courts and Conflict*, 277–312; Smail, *Consumption of Justice*, 89–132, 207–46. For the anthropological scholarship which has influenced historians, see Roberts, 'Study of Dispute'.

[4] Skoda, *Medieval Violence*, 18–49, 159–92. Seminal contributions in this debate are Davis, 'Rites of Violence'; Smail, 'Hatred as a Social Institution'; Rosenwein, *Anger's Past*.

[5] For useful conceptual models on repertoires of conflict, Tilly, *Regimes and Repertoires*, 73–81; McAdam *et al., Dynamics of Contention*, 72–91.

or judicial processes, and other regularized forms of interaction governed by rules. In this mode of conflict, specific groups usually found themselves in charge of particular jurisdictional agencies and used them to influence the political process, either by manipulating the functioning of existing constitutional mechanisms or by adding new ones.

• The final stage of conflict was reached when city dwellers engaged in open warfare to acquire power in the city. In this respect, too, they invoked ideas of law and legitimacy: not only those connected to the polycentric urban order, but practices associated with the conduct of just war in the equally fragmented political order outside the city walls. Imitating the legitimate use of force by sovereign political players, insurgents appropriated and reinterpreted practices of warfare by deploying banners, engaging in targeted looting, and making use of a variety of other military techniques.

PROTEST

Protest comprised the making of claims or the formulation of demands to one or several of a city's jurisdictional agencies, often those associated with governments or those enjoying a particular judicial role. Its main difference from other modes of conflict was that protesters fundamentally relied on these agencies' preparedness to grant such requests. While there was ample room for manoeuvre to apply all sorts of pressures on governments and courts, protesters were not usually able to control particular institutions which would have allowed them to engage in the constitutional bargaining described below; and, although physical force was often used, violence was not the principal means of interaction of this mode of conflict. Protest could take two forms: it could be public, usually involving assemblies and petitioning; but it could also be more concealed, such as when protesters chose more subtle means of protest or used court cases to advance their political demands.

   In its most visible manifestation, protest involved public assemblies. Aggrieved citizens asserted specific demands by claiming authority within one of the many legitimate jurisdictional institutions of the urban body politic, such as the commune, the *popolo*, or guilds. Jurists identified the use of bells, trumpets, drums, and standards as indicators of corporate action to signify gatherings, whether through 'ordinary' councils or 'extraordinary' assemblies. Some, such as the jurists Odofredo (d. 1265) and Pierre de Belleperche (d. 1308), even regarded the use of

such signs as implying the criminal responsibility of the entire membership of a corporation, although other lawyers contested this.[6] Often, this was a prelude to an escalation of conflict. On 26 December 1399, some Bolognese guilds assembled on the city's principal square in protest against a regime established two months earlier. Carrying their pennons, they shouted 'Long live the *popolo* and the guilds (*Viva il popolo e le arti*)', a clear reference to the *popolo* regime which had ruled Bologna in the late thirteenth century and which various coalitions in the later fourteenth century had tried to resurrect. The protesters also proceeded to ring the bells of the communal bell tower (*arrengo*), which was the official sign to convoke the city's legislative councils in the name of the *popolo*. They then managed to step up their protest through hastily convened council meetings, although only one day later, following a backlash, full-scale urban warfare broke out between the contending coalitions.[7]

Quite often, assemblies of this kind led to the submission of petitions. These usually involved the formulation of concrete demands in ways that imitated existing procedures of legislation. On the feast of the Assumption (15 August) 1428, the thirty-six guilds of Tournai assembled on the market square with their banners and arms. Led by the fullers, they then moved to another site of frequent protest in the city, the place du Bécquerel, where they submitted a petition in the name of the 'people and community (*peuple et communaulté*)' of Tournai to the four colleges of the urban government. The petitions—which concerned a reform of taxes on beer and wine, the lowering of the fee for membership of the *bourgeoisie*, and the relationship between the guilds and their leaders—were accepted on the same day. The guilds were here imitating the city's representative assembly known as the *Assemblée de la Communauté*, which, since 1423, was constituted by the city's thirty-six guilds. Usually, this assembly was called upon by the urban government on contentious political issues, but on this occasion the guilds turned this procedure on its head by acting on their own initiative. The urban government initially proclaimed the petition's acceptance from a window of the city hall, but on the following day the guildsmen themselves went to the city hall to ensure that the petition would also be announced from the tribune or balcony known as

[6] Ullmann, 'Delictal Responsibility of Medieval Corporations', 84–5, 93–4; on this subject see also Liddy and Haemers, 'Popular Politics', 774–89; Boone, ' "Armes, coursses, assemblees et commocions" ', 14–20.

[7] *Corpus*, 470–1; Griffoni, 89–90; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 59–62; Borselli, *Cronica*, 67; ASB, PI, 277, no. 1, fos. 32r–37v; ASB, PI, 277, no. 2, fos. 28r–30v; ASB, PI, 277, no. 4, fos. 10r–14r, 24r–25r, 30r–33v, 34r–37v; ASB, PI, 277, no. 5, fos. 61r–62r, 63r–66v, 82r–86v.

bréteque from which governmental ordinances were customarily enunci-
ated.[8] The petition was, in fact, only the first step towards a much more
thorough-going challenge to the city's regime, which, since two revolts
in 1423 and 1425, had been dominated by the deans of Tournai's guilds.
The guilds' rank-and-file had developed increasing resentments against the
regime and eventually came to side with their erstwhile enemies from the
city's patriciate. Following further protests a fortnight later, the compo-
sition of the urban government was partly overhauled, and in the following
three months twenty-one political leaders were executed, a further ten
exiled, and investigations started against another twenty-eight.[9] Through
their behaviour in 1428, the guilds of Tournai were behaving in a way
that was similar to that of their counterparts in neighbouring great cities
of Flanders. At Bruges, for instance, there was a tradition of petitioning
by the city's corporate bodies, known as the Nine Members, which also
constituted the city's representative assembly, the Great Council. Armed
assemblies of guildsmen (known as *wapeninghe*) also often constituted an
important threat to the urban government, and formed part of a tradition
which ultimately reached back to the demands by the *meentucht* (the com-
mons) of Bruges to the count of Flanders in 1280.[10]

Protesters did not always have the leverage enjoyed by the guilds of
Bologna, Tournai, or Bruges. Where it was not possible to pressurize
the government through public assemblies, there were still other chan-
nels to express discontent and to stake political claims. In Lille, which
was characterized by especially low levels of conflict, the city's rulers were
acutely concerned about various concealed ways in which religious and
civic festivals could be disrupted by urban protesters. Ordinances issued in
close proximity to major festivals—such as the famous Procession of Lille,
Corpus Christi, or Saint John the Baptist's Day—specifically banned col-
lective activities such as the planting of trees for the purpose of gathering
people, rhyming competitions, or combats by jousting companies, and
laid down strict regulations for the behaviour of guilds.[11] Such fears are a

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[8] *Chronique*, 400–1; the petition is printed in *TR*, II, 274–7. For representative assem-
blies in Tournai, see Chapter 6, pp. 153–4.

[9] *Chronique*, 401–5; *TR*, II, 277–303. For these events, Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le
roi de Bourges*, 393–417.

[10] Liddy and Haemers, 'Popular Politics', 783–6; Haemers, *For the Common Good?*,
158–9. For practices of petitioning, see also the contributions in the three volumes edited
by Nubola and Würgler: *Suppliche e 'gravamina'*; *Forme della comunicazione politica*; *Operare
la resistenza*.

[11] AML, 373, fos. 3v, 7r, 29v, 34r; AML, 374, fos. 46v, 128v; AML, 376, 90v; Espinas,
Les origines du droit d'association, I, 862–74, II, 379–82. See also Lantschner, 'Voices of the
People'; Fouret, 'La violence en fête'; Knight, 'Processional Theatre'; Knight's introduction
in *Les mystères de la procession de Lille*, I, 31–67.

reminder that not all forms of conflict were necessarily expressive of a legal vocabulary, and that protesters could fall back on a variety of other, often clandestine, practices to express discontent.[12] In Lille, guilds and comparable political units were, in fact, usually too weak to embark on large public gatherings or on pressurizing rulers through petitions. However, the Lillois, like the inhabitants of other cities, could still articulate their demands through one particular route: various courts and the judicial channels associated with them. Although legal cases often did not have a visible political dimension, they could be used by city dwellers to articulate their protest about contentious issues.

Lille's chief executive council, the échevinage, frequently found itself adjudicating in politically sensitive cases because it also operated as the city's principal appeals court.[13] A particularly important example is that of 10 August 1419, when the butchers' guild addressed the échevinage with a complaint about the number of new butchers who had been admitted to the guild since 1400. What looks like a fairly narrow issue had major political implications in practice. Lille had seen an influx of immigrants and a rise in the number of those who acquired the rights of citizenship (*bourgeoisie*) in the late 1410s and 1420s. The butchers complained that those who had recently entered the guild effectively barred members of ancient butcher families from acquiring a stall on the meat market, brought down quality because of their lack of experience, and thereby created 'dishonour (*deshonneur*)' for the entire trade. Comparable issues also provoked major divisions in many neighbouring cities—indeed, in their petition of 1428, the guildsmen of Tournai also raised similar concerns about the regulation of the meat market. What provoked a threatening assembly on a city square in Tournai became in Lille the subject of consultations of the échevinage in its double capacity as civic government and appeals court. The butchers argued that the problems had started in 1400 with a change in the rules of admission to the guild: instead of ten years of necessary practice in the trade and compulsory membership of the Lille *bourgeoisie*, butchers now only needed five years of experience, and instead of a matriculation dinner worth twenty *francs*, new members now only needed to pay ten. Evidently impressed by the butchers' arguments, the échevinage in the end decided to reinstate the guild's old rules of admission, because

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[12] For various other forms of protest, see Dumolyn and Haemers, '"A Bad Chicken Was Brooding"', 56–64; Skoda, *Medieval Violence*, 164–9; Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La ville des cérémonies*, 233–324; Hanawalt and Reyerson, *City and Spectacle*, ix–xviii. In this context, see also the anthropologist James Scott's work on 'hidden transcripts' in *Weapons of the Weak*, 28–47 and *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 1–16, 183–207.

[13] Maufroid, *Essai sur l'échevinage*, 82–140. For a more detailed analysis of Lille, as well as Verona, which saw similar practices of conflict, see Chapter 7.

these were 'more profitable for the common good of the public weal'.[14] This, incidentally, did not put an end to the dispute between old and new butchers, because the latter also appear to have applied to the échevinage. Balancing the interests of both, it was eventually decided in October 1449 to establish a separate butchery for the *homines novi*.[15]

Protest could also be articulated by invoking several competing judicial agencies and, thereby, further politicizing the contentious issue. A spectacular case is that of the Lille citizen Gilles d'Auffay, a grain merchant who created 'noise and scandal' (*noise et esclandre*) in February 1407.[16] This case was straightforwardly political: d'Auffay had spread rumours that Lille's urban government had been bribed by the shearers' guild and found himself banished by the échevinage for 'injurious words . . . which were greatly against the honour of the urban government'[17]. At this point, d'Auffay decided to seek redress outside Lille, and thereby transformed his protest into a wider jurisdictional conflict. He took his dispute before the high court of the *Parlement* of Paris, which, however, transferred the case to the Council of Flanders, the appeals court of the county of Flanders under the jurisdiction of the duke of Burgundy. Gilles claimed that the city had not respected the proper judicial order and pointed to evidence for corruption in the city, while Lille responded with the jurisdictional argument that it possessed 'several fine privileges, franchises, liberties, constitutions, and usages'[18], which limited Gilles's right of appeal outside the city. In the end, d'Auffay's protest turned out to be successful. On 13 November 1411, the Council of Flanders struck down the city of Lille's original sentence in a way that itself crossed the boundaries of law and politics: d'Auffay's verbal insult, the judgement argued, did not justify a penal sentence, and the Council also advanced the fundamentally political judgement that the banishment had harmed trade in Flanders because d'Auffay was in possession of grain reserves worth 300 *livres*. The city of Lille, however, did not want to accept this sentence and promptly appealed before the *Parlement* in Paris. At this point, on 30 December 1411, King Charles VI's government intervened in the dispute and issued a letter enjoining the *bailli* of Tournai to enforce the Council's original judgement because of the need to protect grain supplies at a time of war.

[14] 'plus prouffitable au bien commun de la chose publicque'. This case is published in Espinas, *Les origines du droit d'association*, II, 375–7. For the *bourgeoisie* of Lille, see Desportes, 'Réceptions et inscriptions', 542–8; Casteur, *Les bourgeois à Lille*, 15–25.

[15] Espinas, *Les origines du droit d'association*, II, 400–4.

[16] The case is in AML, 60/1299.

[17] 'paroles iniurieuses . . . qui estoient grandement contre lonneur de la loy dicelle ville'.

[18] 'plusieurs beaux privileges, franchises, libertez, constitucions et usages'.

Local political protest over the shearers' guild and corruption in Lille had, therefore, not only become the subject of court hearings, but was transformed into a political conflict *sui generis*, which involved the highest jurisdictional agencies. D'Auffay's was not, of course, a protest like that of the guilds of Bologna or Tournai; unspectacular as it was, it was not reported by chroniclers or sources other than the legal records that it left behind. However, d'Auffay's protest also shared an important trait with such more visible actions: the veneer of legality, certainly disputed by his rivals, under which he brought his discontent about political conditions in Lille before several jurisdictional agencies.

CONSTITUTIONAL BARGAINING

Many late medieval European cities stood out for the bargaining that took place around what may broadly be termed the constitutional mechanisms of urban arenas: elections, consultative, legislative, and judicial processes, as well as a whole variety of regularized forms of interaction which were governed by more or less formal rules.[19] It is well-known that such rules were often little more than window-dressing: deals were often struck in the comfort of urban houses or in the city's dusty streets and squares rather than in council chambers or through ballots. Nevertheless, it matters that city dwellers were so keen on using recognized constitutional mechanisms for their confrontations. This mode of conflict also often represented an escalation from mere protest: while protesters made their demands to a superior jurisdictional agency, those engaging in constitutional bargaining were usually directly in charge of one or more agencies associated with particular mechanisms of interaction. Two strategies stand out: one was to manipulate existing mechanisms in such ways as to further one's political goals, while preserving the apparent normality of the political process; the other was to add layers of parallel and competing constitutional mechanisms to what were already complicated political dynamics.

The first strategy was, in many ways, the bread and butter of urban politics. A well-known example was the above-mentioned imposition or cancellation of bans and banishments by political groups which were able to control the judicial apparatus of a city. In spite of the legalism behind such sentences, there was ample room for manoeuvre for the manipulation of underlying legal procedures. A good example is the revolt of the Maltraversi party of Bologna, led by the jurist Carlo Zambeccari, on 6 May 1398.[20] The rebels,

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[19] See Chapter 6, pp. 131–2, for how I use the term constitution.
[20] For this revolt, see also Chapter 5, p. 115.

who had stormed the city's main square and destroyed parts of its archives, curiously left the commune's principal institutions in power. This was for a good reason: in practice, they forced upon them a variety of measures, including the appointment of a plenipotentiary reform commission. They also constrained the colleges of the urban government to revoke the bans of ninety individuals, many of whom came from families—such as the da Saliceto, Galluzzi, and Isolani—who had been closely associated with the Maltraversi. A legal process was established for other exiles of whom 262 successfully applied within the following month to have their sentences cancelled, but the Maltraversi's hand was clearly visible in the rules which underlay this process: an ordinance of 17 May clarified that the Pepoli family and their supporters—long-standing opponents of the Maltraversi—were to be excluded from this amnesty. Although this process was driven by fundamentally political concerns, the importance given to legal proceedings is nevertheless surprising. Exiles were required to present an act of pacification with the aggrieved party if they wanted their bans cancelled, but an ordinance of 26 May exempted Francesco da Sassuolo from this requirement because he could not obtain the necessary documentation. The plenipotentiary reform commission, the *Sedici Riformatori dello Stato di Libertà*, even decided to reimburse those guilds which lost the lands that they had acquired from the confiscated possessions of the exiles. However, because of budgetary pressures, their original investments were not to be repaid directly, but converted into obligations in the communally-funded debt (*Monte*) with an annual interest rate of six per cent.[21]

The manipulation of constitutional mechanisms was most evident in those cities, such as Florence and Tournai, where long-standing frameworks of political institutions had created relatively robust mechanisms of bargaining which included manifold councils, colleges, and assemblies as well as their underlying electoral mechanisms.[22] Although they were governed by certain rules, the functioning of such conciliar mechanisms was, in practice, subject to the tactical manoeuvres of their participants. A good example are the *pratiche* of Florence: called by the Signoria, they were advisory meetings, whose proceedings were recorded in great detail by the Florentine bureaucracy, but their actual conduct, composition, and role was very much open to negotiation.[23] Two *pratiche*, convened on 27 and 28 May 1414, exemplify how such manipulations were possible. The

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[21] ASB, Provvigioni in capreto, 6, fos. 22r–23r, 28v–29r, 36r–40r. See also Tamba, *Il regime del popolo e delle arti*, 113–17, 121–3, 125.

[22] See Chapter 6.

[23] Herde, 'Politische Verhaltensweisen der Florentiner Oligarchie', 175–9; Brucker, *Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 283–302.

Signoria, then under the leadership of Maso degli Albizzi, called these two meetings to receive backing for its peace negotiations with King Ladislas of Naples with whom Florence had, for nearly a year, been fighting a war which had been as disastrous as it had been divisive within the city.[24] The *pratiche* were a useful tool for the Signoria: although there was no strict legal requirement for the consent of such assemblies, they nevertheless represented an official way of displaying, both internally and externally, cohesion and unity among the elite. At the same time, they were also a risky instrument: only a fortnight earlier, on 15 May, Maso had failed to win support in the *pratiche* for the same proposed peace mission.[25] Unsurprisingly, various strategies were employed in the meetings of 27 and 28 May to engineer an outcome that was to the Signoria's liking. First, less than half of the members of the unsuccessful 15 May meeting were invited.[26] Second, it is likely that the proceedings were stage-managed. Although the discussion started with a negative statement by one of the fiercest supporters of the war, the third speaker, Maso's associate Lorenzo Ridolfi, gave a rousing speech in favour of the negotiations with Ladislas. The two following speakers, Giovanni Salviati and Federico Machiavelli, agreed with Lorenzo. Then, Onofrio di Giovanni Bischeri also sided with Lorenzo, but expressed some scepticism over Ladislas's commitment. The meeting had been transformed: from this point, nearly all speakers agreed to the peace negotiations. As many as twenty-six shared the opinion of Ridolfi, and another six that of Bischeri. After a further day of debate on 28 May, five leading defenders of the war had changed sides, and the diplomatic peace mission, which was eventually successful, went ahead.[27]

The manipulation of established constitutional mechanisms only represented one possible strategy for city dwellers. A second strategy was to add new mechanisms of bargaining to the political framework in ways that usually intensified conflicts. Cities such as Florence or Bologna were notorious for the frequent appointment of special commissions (*balìe*) in times

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[24] For this war, see Brucker, *Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 353–95. For Maso's role, see *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, I, 237–8.

[25] ASF, CP, 42, fos. 132r–134r.

[26] ASF, CP, 42, fos. 138r–142r. Furthermore, only one invited speaker (Ridolfo Peruzzi) had also been present at the *pratica* of 25 October 1413 when the controversial decision had been taken to ally with the pope against Ladislas: ASF, CP, 42, fos. 83v–84r.

[27] ASF, CP, 42, fos. 138r–142r. Former supporters of the war who sustained Maso by 28 May were Vanni Castellani, Rinaldo Gianfigliazzi, Ridolfo Peruzzi, Filippo Salviati, and Niccolò da Uzzano. Note that Maso was again challenged in two further *pratiche* as early as 14 and 15 June 1414: ASF, CP, 42, fos. 144r–149v. When the peace treaty was eventually put before the *Consiglio dei Duecento* for approval, it only narrowly passed the necessary threshold: Bartolomeo del Corazza, 'Diario fiorentino', 252–3.

of political crisis to circumvent ordinary procedures.[28] This phenomenon found parallels in the Southern Low Countries, but these are much less well-studied. A good example is Tournai, where, after the above-mentioned protests of 15 August 1428, the assembly of guildsmen—initially on its own initiative, but later with the support of the urban government—also elected a special commission composed of two delegates (*commis*) per guild. Charged with reviewing communal policies and accounts, this commission effectively came to work alongside the urban government under whose official seal they also demanded to be invested. Directing their jurisdictional powers against the leading exponents of the guild regime, they arrested several office-holders and launched investigations against the *bailli* of the *Tournaisis*, but also drafted reforms of military service as well as the terms on which political exiles could return to the city. Although they were required to formally submit these items to the urban government of Tournai, the *commis* were increasingly recognized as a jurisdictional agency.[29] In late September 1428, their enemies—led by the dean of the weavers—stormed to the market square shouting 'Long live the king, down with the *commis*, up with the deans [of the guilds], and free the prisoners!'. The challenge, however, failed and, under the aegis of the urban government and the *commis*, dozens were executed or exiled.[30] There is evidence that there continued to be *commis* in Tournai until 1430, although they were opposed by some guilds—most notably the weavers— who refused to elect new delegates.[31] The tactic of appointing *commis* was again taken up more than twenty years later. In July 1451, in the wake of a budgetary crisis, *commis* were once more appointed by the guilds, but this time after the *Assemblée de la Communauté* had been convened by the urban government itself. The *commis* were to hold 'the same power and not less than that delegated [*baillié*] to the *commis* by the said *communauté* in the year 1428'.[32] Accompanied by violent protests of angry Tournaisiens, the *commis* again went about inspecting urban accounts, and arrested and imprisoned urban officials. They also drew up a charter of complaints and sent a delegation to the king so that the *commis* would receive royal

[28] For Florence, see Chapter 6, p. 142; for Bologna, see Tamba, *Il regime del popolo e delle arti*, 11–27.

[29] *Chronique*, 401; *TR*, II, 277, 279, 282–3, 298–503. See also Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 401–5, 417.

[30] 'Vive le roi, le comis jus, les doiens supz et les prisonniers délivrez!', *Chronique*, 403. See also *TR*, II, 284–5.

[31] *TR*, II, 307–8, 316, 321–3, 375.

[32] 'autel povoir et non mendre que cellui qui fu baillié aux commis de par ladite com-munauté en l'an 1428', *TR*, III, 154–6.

confirmation and see their powers extended 'for the common good and well-being of the city'.[33]

 In cities with high levels of political conflict, insurgent coalitions introduced new constitutional mechanisms particularly frequently. In the volatile political system of Liège, rebels repeatedly established two types of jurisdictional agencies to control judicial and executive power. First, a special court known as the *Vingt-Deux* was created by rebels to deal with complaints against episcopal jurisdiction. It first appeared in December 1373, in the wake of a one-year war between the prince-bishop and Liège alongside other cities of the principality. Further confrontations necessitated subsequent changes to the regulations underlying the *Vingt-Deux* in 1374 and 1376.[34] A Tribunal called *Vingt-Deux* was again established in 1395 following a further outbreak of conflict between the prince-bishop and the cities.[35] Another jurisdictional agency which was closely associated with urban warfare in the city was the appointment of a *mambour* (governor) by rebels to replace prince-bishops who had been forced to flee.[36] First used after a further escalation of violence between the prince-bishop and the cities in 1375, this allowed rebels to acquire full jurisdictional control over the principality, including the city of Liège—principally, powers to collect episcopal revenues, to administer justice, and to make appointments when vacancies arose. Legally speaking, such strategies were extremely problematic, because a *mambour* could usually only be elected by the cathedral chapter in periods of episcopal vacancy. As ever, rebels found ways to circumvent tricky issues. As was stressed by the charter which sealed the *mambour*'s election, the bishop had himself broken earlier agreements and his departure had left the country 'without a governor and a defender (*sans mambour ne defendeur*)', thereby requiring the cities of the prince-bishopric to take action. According to the chronicler Zantfliet, the prince-bishop had no inclination to return to the city as long as the *mambour* and the *Vingt-Deux* governed, because he did not want to rule alongside twenty-two other bishops.[37] In 1403 and, together with the other cities of the prince-bishopric, in 1406 Liège again elected a *mambour* in reaction to disputes about the bishop's use of summary trials and other supposed transgressions of his power. On the latter occasion, the prince-bishopric autonomously governed itself under the rule

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[33] 'pour le bien et resourse de la ville', *Chronique*, 475. For the activities of the *commis*, see *Chronique*, 471–4; *TR*, III, 166, 170. For the 1450s, see also Chapter 6, pp. 158–62.

[34] *LO*, 328–31, 334–9.   [35] *LO*, 373–5.

[36] See Marchandisse, 'La vacance du siège épiscopal'.

[37] Kurth, *La cité de Liège*, II, 326–8; Zantfliet, col. 305.

of a *mambour* for two years until it was reconquered by an international coalition led by the duke of Burgundy.[38]

New agencies such as these significantly altered the politics of Liège. However, they hardly represented a departure from a political culture dominated by legalistic concerns and multiple jurisdictions. City dwellers who fought each other through constitutional bargaining showed themselves firmly entrenched in the complex political order of late medieval cities, whether they acted through established constitutional mechanisms or turned to creating new ones.

URBAN WARFARE

Conflict reached a different stage when rebels appropriated and reinterpreted practices connected with the conduct of war. At such a point, city dwellers became embroiled in battles and sieges, and made use of matériel involving a variety of weapons for combat. The ready access of rival urban coalitions to military technology is remarkable. One of the main contenders of political conflicts in Bologna, the Gozzadini family, spent more than 1650 *lire* between April and June 1403 to purchase gun powder, missiles, and banners, as well as to pay mercenaries fighting for them.[39] Rebels also often had direct military experience. As Richard Trexler has found, of the small number of Ciompi known by name at least twenty-six served in the city's companies of crossbowmen. Several of the rebels of Tournai in the 1420s had also been involved in the Anglo-French war, including at Agincourt, as well as in several confrontations with the neighbouring nobility.[40]

Although rebels undoubtedly felt that military strategies were tactically important to gain the upper hand in cities, they were also keen on tapping the legitimating potential of practices associated with the conduct of just

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[38] *CRJB*, 151–2, 161–4; Stavelot, 18, 97–9; Zantfliet, col. 361; *LR*, III, 91–4. See also Chapter 5, pp. 104, 119–20.

[39] Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna, Archivio Gozzadini, Libro di Ricordi, 1, no. 6 ('Castellano di Nanne Gozzadini'), fos. 7r–9v. The cover illustration of this book shows the involvement of military gear in a plot attempt led by the Gozzadini in March 1399, as imagined by the illustrator of a contemporary Lucchese chronicle: Sercambi, *Le croniche*, II, 274; Banti and Testi Cristiani, *Le illustrazioni delle Croniche*, II, no. 429.

[40] For the Ciompi, Trexler, 'Neighbours and Comrades', 64, 67, 97–100; Brucker, 'Ciompi Revolution', 329. For Tournai, such connections could be found for Jean Boussart, Lotart Hachart, Jacques le Louchier, Piérart Mallet, Pierre Marissiel, and Ernoul le Muisit: *TR*, I, 44, 45–6, 79–80, 124, 172, 205, 280–1; *TR*, II, 287–8, 291–3, 356, 375; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 307, 411–13; see also Schnerb, 'Tournai et Azincourt'.

war. This was the ultimate manifestation of a polycentric order, because rebels engaged in forms of action that were characteristic of the fragmented politics outside city walls, and thereby made use of practices that were usually reserved for sovereign powers. Similarities between internal and external warfare prompted contemporaries frequently to characterize revolts as 'wars'. In spite of the legal differences between them, judicial documents in Bologna sometimes referred to insurgents as 'enemies and rebels (*inimici et rebelles*)', especially when they were also involved in acts of warfare in the city's contado.[41] In Tournai, a guild assembly openly acknowledged the war-like character of the intensive political clashes between Burgundian and Dauphinist supporters in the city when it called for an end to all 'wars, contentions, and dissensions (*guerres, contens et dissencions*)' in the city in December 1424, and demanded that 'all the wars between friends and other confrontations' should cease.[42]

The aims of just war were not altogether different from the pursuit of justice which insurgents frequently advocated. Augustine, in a famous formulation with reverberations for subsequent discussions of warfare in the Middle Ages, defined just war as a means to redress injury in the interest of peace—something that was echoed by the influential commentaries of Raymond of Peñafort (d. 1275) and Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) in the thirteenth century, both of whom stressed the need of a just cause and righteous intent as legitimating factors for warfare. The popular manuals on warfare by Giovanni da Legnano (d. 1383) and Honoré Bouvet (d. early fifteenth century) both emphasized the need 'to set wrong right' (Bouvet) as a justification of war.[43] Such discourses could easily strike a chord with insurgents clamouring for justice and fighting the evils of tyranny. Giangaleazzo Visconti, ruler of the Milanese state, openly played with this overlap between the aims of war and revolt, when he defied the signore of Verona, Antonio della Scala, in April 1387. In a letter to the citizens of Verona, Giangaleazzo reminded them that he was also acting in their interest, because he intended to liberate the subjects of the della Scala from the serfdom in which they were living. Such external ideological (and indeed military) support was welcome to the Veronese population, which had become increasingly alienated by the tyrannical pretensions of the della Scala, whose court was monopolized by courtiers from Ravenna

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[41] See, for instance, the judicial proceedings in ASB, PS, 22, fos. 77r–87r, 106r–113r.
[42] 'toutes guerres d'amis et autres rancunes cessent', *TR*, II, 127.
[43] Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God*, 933–40 (IX.12–13); Raymond of Peñafort, *Summa de poenitentia et matrimonio*, 184–5 (II.5.17); Aquinas, *S. Thomae Aquinatis doctoris angelici opera omnia*, VIII, 312–4 (*Summa theologiae*, IIa IIae, quaest. XL, art. I); Giovanni da Legnano, *Tractatus de bello*, 85–8 (X); Honoré Bouvet, *The Tree of Battles*, 125–6 (IV.1). See also Keen, *Laws of War*, 63–81.

attached to Antonio's wife Samaritana da Polenta. In the end, Antonio was also brought down by a combination of external warfare and a lack of support inside the city: in October 1387, Milanese troops conquered Verona with the help of prominent Veronese families such as the Bevilacqua and Malaspina, who had already passed into Milanese service earlier in the previous decade, and the passive connivance of the Veronese population, which largely refused to defend the della Scala regime.[44]

Theological and legal commentators on warfare, it should be stressed, were keen to emphasize the differences between warfare and revolt, but insurgents may have sometimes wanted to ignore such subtleties. Aquinas stressed that warfare could only be conducted under the legitimate authority of a prince. Revolts, by contrast, were unlike wars, because they took place within the same community and involved the rebellion of subjects to their superior.[45] There was, unsurprisingly, considerable disagreement among theorists themselves on what constituted legitimate authority to conduct wars and whether this was only possessed by the emperor and kings, or also extended to other jurisdictions lower down the political hierarchy. The right to conduct war, in principle, excluded subjects from attacking their superiors, but exceptions were also made. Giovanni da Legnano admitted the possibility for war as a form of resistance when one's own prince acted against the law (*contra ius*), incidentally on the basis of the same passages—the *Lex prohibitum* and *Lex devotum* (Cod. X.1.5 and XII.40.5)—which Bartolo da Sassoferrato used to legitimate resistance. War against one's prince was, however, only possible if there was no doubt about the prince's breach of justice: if there was, one could only lead a war against him if his possibly unlawful actions could not be rescinded. Giovanni raised this possibility in the context of his discussion of purely defensive war (*bellum particulare*), which also legitimated wars between subjects themselves and which could be distinguished from universal corporeal war (*bellum universale corporale*), which only princes could, in theory, fight.[46]

Urban warfare oscillated between these various understandings. Insurgents were frequently keen to stress the legitimate nature of their war-like actions by pointing to the support of external powers possessing the authority to declare war. Cries of war invoking such authority were one

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[44] Published in Pier Zagata, *Cronica*, I, 135–50; on 1387, see Chapter 7, pp. 170–1.

[45] Aquinas, *S. Thomae Aquinatis doctoris angelici opera omnia*, VIII, 312–14, 320 (*Summa theologiae*, IIa IIae, quaest. XL, art. I and quaest. XLII, art. I).

[46] Giovanni da Legnano, *Tractatus de bello*, 94 (XIV), 130 (LXXIX), 140 (LXXXIX). For Bartolo's theory of resistance, see Chapter 1, pp. 34–6. For wars between subjects, see also Firnhaber-Baker, 'Seigneurial War and Royal Power'.

such means used in battles and were also a prominent feature of violent confrontations in cities. When opponents of Venetian rule in Verona occupied the Ponte Nuovo in 1412, they were reported to have shouted 'Long live the Empire and the Scala (*Viva l'Imperio e la Scala*)'—not only to announce the alliance between the Emperor Sigismund (then at war with Venice) and the della Scala family, but certainly also to point at (alleged) imperial support for their actions. They were, however, challenged by the Venetian officials and their supporters in Verona who shouted back 'Long live San Marco and the government of the doge (*Viva San Marco e la ducal Signoria*)'. Understandably, Venetian authorities got very nervous when an allegedly insane man ran across Verona's principal square in August 1416 shouting 'Scala, Scala', and they immediately sentenced him to be hanged.[47] Insurgents also often used the unfurled banners of sovereign powers—a practice which, according to the medieval laws of war, signified the declaration of public war and legitimated armed confrontations and the taking of spoil.[48] The guild coalition in Tournai, which was supported by the dauphin Charles VII in the 1420s, was found carrying the unfurled banner of the dauphin on at least three occasions when they were confronting their Burgundian opponents in the city.[49] In Ghent, the comital banner of Flanders was even used as a show of authority by guildsmen in 1451, when they were rebelling against the duke of Burgundy over a whole host of issues related to the city's jurisdictional privileges. It was undoubtedly also intended to remind the duke of his duties as count of Flanders.[50]

A variety of banners of other authorities could be used in the context of urban warfare. After conquering the palace of the podestà, one of Florence's main judicial officers, the Ciompi and their allies placed the banner of the blacksmiths' guild on top of it, while hanging Florence's sovereign banner (the *gonfalone della giustizia*), all other banners of the guilds, except that of the wool guild, and the banner of the *popolo minuto* from a window of the palace. The legitimating role of such banners clearly preoccupied governments, because the newly constituted Florentine Signoria ordered all the banners and pennons of the city's military companies, the *gonfaloni*, to be brought to the governmental palace. On 31 August 1378, when a Ciompi splinter group again threatened the government, the Signoria ordered all guilds to surrender their banners: the refusal of the Ciompi to surrender theirs—displaying arms which they had received from Florence's

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[47] Sanudo, cols. 865–6; British Library, Add. MS. 8577 ('Cronica di Venezia'), fos. 71v–72r; Zagata, 52, 55.
[48] Keen, *Laws of War*, 106–8. For banners in the context of revolts, Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, 177–88.
[49] *Chronique*, 382; *TR*, II, 63; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 223, 531–2.
[50] *Dagboek van Gent*, I, 158.

erstwhile signore, Walter of Brienne, in the early 1340s—triggered a violent battle on the Piazza della Signoria, after which the Ciompi guild was dismantled.[51] Guild banners also had an unmistakably military function in many cities with strong guild regimes. In the confrontation between two urban coalitions in Liège over the Datin family's power on 6 January 1433, the blacksmiths' guild acquired a leadership function, when most other guilds assembled with their pennons behind the blacksmiths' banner and marched toward the market square to face their opponents who had built large bulwarks to secure the square. The blacksmiths' banner was so important to this enterprise that the night before, when Datin followers had already occupied strategic locations, the blacksmiths risked crossing the entire city to reach the house where their banner was stored.[52]

Insurgents also reinterpreted specific performances associated with the conduct of external warfare specifically for the conduct of war inside cities. A case in point is the taking of spoil and the destruction of property, which, at least in legal theory, was a licit feature of warfare.[53] The frequent involvement of external powers in urban conflicts certainly encouraged looting. When Mantuan and Milanese troops briefly occupied Verona in November 1439 with the help of Veronese citizens, some inhabitants felt empowered to engage in the taking of spoil. For instance, three men from the *contrada* of San Marco, who enjoyed the protection of the Milanese captain Alvise dal Verme, looted the grain stores of merchants who had remained loyal to the Venetians. However, the Venetian authorities later prosecuted the looters and did not recognize the legitimacy that the combatants possibly hoped to claim for their actions.[54] However, insurgents, not unlike many sovereign governments themselves, appear to have been ambivalent towards this issue. After Bologna's revolt against papal rule in March 1376, insurgents soon became concerned about the widespread looting to which the papal legate and his followers had fallen victim. Already five days after the revolt, a popular assembly condemned these occurrences, and the podestà investigated more than twenty individuals for looting and robbery in the wake of the revolt.[55] This included a man called Farina who allegedly told his friends that, because of the

[51] *Diario*, 369, 377–8; Stefani, 332–4; *Tumulto*, 75, 81–2 (Squittinatore), 119–20 (Compagnano), 131 (Strozziana), 152 (Bonifazii). For the Ciompi banner, Stefani, 322; see also Trexler, 'Follow the Flag'.
[52] Stavelot, 299, 302–3.   [53] Keen, *Laws of War*, 101–18.
[54] ASVer, Atti dei Rettori Veneti, 8, fos. 5r–6v, 45v–46r, 74r–75v, 77r, 135r–135v, 204r–219r, 274r–279r, 332r–342r, 382r–384r, 439r–443r, 471r–471v; ASVer, AAC, 58, fos. 40r–41v; Cristoforo da Soldo, *La cronaca*, 39–40.
[55] ASB, PI, 224, no. 1, fos. 1r–3v, 5r–9r, 17r–18r, 88r–89r; Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 71–6.

opportunities offered by the revolt, 'we shall rob whatever we can (*deroba-bimus quicquid poterimus*)', while another man from Modena was accused of stealing property worth more than two hundred gold ducats from the monastery of San Michele in Bosco.[56] By clamping down on such alleged transgressions the authorities displayed their concern about public opinion because, as the judicial documents stated, there was a danger that scandal could arise in the city as a result.

Nevertheless, looting or even outright destruction did have a place in urban warfare, although insurgents usually specifically targeted objects with which their grievances were most closely bound up. After the urban battle in Liège on 6 January 1433 the victorious guilds proceeded, in a quasi-judicial capacity, to burn the houses of more than a dozen opponents, while in the wake of the Ciompi revolt rebels burnt the houses of over thirty rival families between June and July 1378. On this latter occasion, some also wanted to loot, although this caused at least some disagreement among the rebels: one Florentine insurgent was even reproached for stealing a chicken and was forced to throw his loot back into the fire.[57] Public property was also usually only attacked for specific reasons. A guild revolt in Tournai in July 1425, which may also have been partly aimed at long-standing conflicts on the question of currency devaluations, led to the occupation and plunder of the city's mint.[58] In Bologna, the fortifications of the Milanese and papal regimes were destroyed in the revolts of September 1403 and May 1411. The guild-led rebels who stormed the papal citadel of Porta Galiera in 1411 also looted its buildings, but apparently took the citadel's ammunition to the commune's arsenal of weapons. Most damage to public property in Bologna did not occur to buildings, however, but rather to the parchment and paper of governmental archives: in March 1376, insurgents destroyed the register containing the names of exiles; in December 1393, they burnt the records for the selection of office-holders; and in May 1398, these were burnt again, alongside the tax registers and ordinances of the city government in the revolt led by Carlo Zambeccari.[59] However, it was rare for governmental archives to be fully destroyed—as the abundance of Bologna's communal archives demonstrates to this day.

[56] ASB, PI, 224, no. 1, fos. 2r–3v.

[57] For Liège, Stavelot, 313. For Florence, Stefani, 319–20, 322; *Tumulto*, 107–8 (Compagnano). For arson as a judicial punishment, Delcourt, *La vengeance de la commune*, 33–47.

[58] *TR*, II, 173–4. For monetary conflicts, see Chapter 6, pp. 154–6.

[59] *Corpus*, 453–7, 491–9, 500, 506–10, 551–2; Griffoni, 72, 87–8, 92, 103; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 130–2, 177–9, 234; ASB, PS, 35, 'Sentenze (1413–15)', fos. 153r–154v.

All this meant that the destructive effect of urban warfare was somewhat limited. Insurgents were frequently keen to stress how relatively bloodless their actions were. The urban government formed after Bologna's revolt against the papal governor in March 1376 justified its actions before a legatine court by emphasizing that no undue violence had taken place, and an inquest was opened against individuals who stood accused of wounding the papal legate with their weapons. This undoubtedly made reconciliation with the papacy, barely a year later, easier.[60] Such claims were not always true, but it is altogether rare to find reports of particularly high levels of death in the wake of urban warfare. Even bearing in mind the notorious difficulty of relying on any available figures in this regard, this is somewhat surprising because chroniclers were not often, and judicial investigators were rarely, on the side of rebels and, therefore, unlikely to want to lend an air of legitimacy to revolts. In thirteen major occurrences of urban warfare in Bologna between 1376 and 1416 deaths were only reported on six occasions. The bloodiest battles, out of proportion to any of the others, were those involving the Bentivoglio family in December 1399 (six deaths) and June 1402 (eight deaths), in addition to the Bolognese revolt against Milan in September 1403, which possibly also involved foreign troops (twelve deaths).[61] Even the most violent battle of the Ciompi revolt on 31 August 1378 saw otherwise quite hostile chroniclers reporting a death toll of between six and twenty people—a high number, although not necessarily if one takes into account that hundreds of people took part in this confrontation.[62] There were, of course, exceptions, especially when outside armies were involved. When a force of 8,000 men led by the duke of Burgundy and the count of Hainaut-Holland defeated the Hédroits

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[60] Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 77–83; ASB, PI, 224, no. 1, fos. 13r–20v; *Corpus*, 309–13; Borselli, *Cronica*, 54–5.

[61] Out of thirteen instances of urban warfare in Bologna, deaths in battle were recorded for 27 December 1399 (6 deaths), 26 June 1402 (8), 2 September 1403 (12), an unknown date in 1411 (1), 25 August 1412 (1), and 6 January 1416 (1). For this data, see *Corpus*, 470–1, 476–7, 481–3, 491–9, 500, 540–1, 553–4; Griffoni, 89–90, 92, 100; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 59–62, 110–12, 130–2, 242–4; Borselli, *Cronica*, 67; ASB, PS, 34, 'Condemnationes (1412)', fos. 83r–84v. This count excludes the reported death of twenty-six individuals in a skirmish between papal and Milanese troops in July 1403, although at least some of them may have been Bolognese citizens (*Corpus*, 490–7; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 130–2). The thirteen instances of major urban warfare here considered were March and December 1376, March 1377, December 1393, March 1398, October and December 1399, February–March 1401, June 1402, September 1403, May 1411, August 1412, and January 1416.

[62] Stefani, 332–4 (6 deaths); *Diario*, 378 (20 deaths); *Tumulto*, 152 (Bonifazii; 12–15 deaths). Only a few chroniclers reported deaths in the violent confrontations of July: *Tumulto*, 112 (Compagnano); *Diario*, 367. There were many more deaths in the quasi-judicial persecution of Ciompi in early September 1378, but it is impossible to reconstruct the numbers involved.

at the Battle of Othée (September 1408), the duke even suspended all practices of ransoming. As a result, there was an extraordinarily high number of deaths, although probably still fewer than the 8,368–13,000 dead reported by local chroniclers, or the sensational figure of 24,000–26,000 reported by the duke of Burgundy himself.[63] This foreshadowed the considerably higher death tolls of early modern revolts, in which increasingly stronger armies and interventionist governments drove up the number of casualties.[64]

Urban warfare marked a significant escalation of conflict and came, without any doubt, at a substantial cost. However, it was also part of a wider repertoire of modes of conflict. Like public or concealed forms of protest, and existing or newly-created modes of bargaining, the various practices of urban warfare were closely bound up with the polycentric order of cities whose power-wielding units as well as their associated legal procedures created a shared framework of action. Behind the use of one practice or another, there were tactical considerations, often informed, as we shall see in Part II, by the nature of the political system in which city dwellers acted. Rebels and protesters disagreed profoundly with the regimes which they attacked, but many of them were frequently keen to act on the basis of some kind of licit authority, through constitutional channels, or by adopting legitimate forms of violence. It is not surprising that the highest numbers of deaths in revolts occurred not on the battlefield, but through the political apparatus which insurgents were always so quick to appropriate. It is telling that in Tournai few deaths were reported in the pitched battles which took place across three revolts and several plots between 1423 and 1428, while the rebel-led urban governments of these years made extensive use of legal channels to eliminate their fiercest enemies. They executed at least seventy-four people, thirty-six of them for declared political reasons such as conspiracy, treason, or sedition—which is ironic, given the debatable legitimacy of these governments themselves.[65]

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[63] Monstrelet, I, 351, 364–5; *CRJB*, 199–200; Stavelot, 118–19; *LR*, III, 107–10. For Othée, see also Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 57–8; Gaier, *Art et organisation militaire*, 312–20. For ransoming, Keen, *Laws of War*, 156–85.

[64] Cohn, 'Repression of Popular Revolt'.

[65] 'Nombreux extraits de condamnations à mort'; *Chronique*, 396, 399–400.

3

Action Groups

At the end of August 1378, Florentine wool-workers (known as Ciompi) threatened to burn down an unusual site which can tell us much about the dynamics of late medieval urban groups that engaged in joint political action. The target of this worker-dominated action group was the Cella di Ciardo, a Florentine tavern, which had been closely associated with the insurgent coalition that had overturned the Florentine government barely a month earlier. The Ciompi had fallen out with most of their former allies, and they now wanted to destroy one of the venues where members of that coalition had quite possibly met, exchanged information, and struck deals. The tavern was, after all, located in the neighbourhood of the Lion d'Oro, not far from the residences of the Medici who, as we shall see, played a crucial part in the formation of the coalition which the Ciompi now abandoned. The tavern's two owners, Gottolo and Ciardo, had both received offices in the wake of the revolt, and Ciardo had worked in the workshop of the textile entrepreneur Francesco del Bene, who also happened to be one of the elite supporters of the Ciompi.[1] The Cella di Ciardo had, in fact, already played a role in political conflict in 1343, when Pagnotto Strozzi had used the tavern to harangue members of the *popolo minuto*, the city's unenfranchised workers and artisans, after a failed plot by his father.[2]

Infrastructure, such as that offered by a tavern, was crucial to the operation of any political grouping. The hapless Ciompi of August 1378 certainly had to recognize this, not least because by themselves they effectively lacked the necessary resources to mount a successful challenge. If

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[1] *Tumulto*, 114, 119 (Compagnano); Stefani, 326. For these actors, see Trexler, 'Neighbours and Comrades', 60, 78–80; Hoshino, 'Francesco di Iacopo del Bene'; Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi*, 55–6. Ironically, Betto di Ciardo—presumably the son of one of the owners, and also an earlier supporter of the July revolt—may have joined this Ciompi splinter group, while Gottolo played a crucial role in defeating it: *Tumulto*, 74, 80 (Squittinatore).

[2] Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, 93–4.

relatively informal mechanisms such as that of a tavern already played a role in bringing together city dwellers from different walks of life it is all the more important to investigate the involvement of other power structures in the formation of action groups. In particular, the multiple political units of cities played an important role in facilitating and stimulating the development of such groups, and in providing the economic, military, and legal resources required by them. The aim of this chapter is to develop a framework to distinguish between the different types of action groups which were galvanized around these pre-existing bodies, and therefore to analyse another facet of the logic of political conflict in late medieval cities: the strategies and tactics adopted to create and strengthen the groups through which the protagonists of political conflict could advance their objectives. The polycentric urban arena, in addition to allowing the legitimation of conflict and shaping the modes through which conflict was expressed, thus also provided the very bases around which political action was organized.

Under the influence of anthropology, historians have unearthed an urban world teeming with diverse groups involved in joint political action, whether these were families, guilds, confraternities, parishes, neighbourhoods, or factions. This has gone hand in hand with a particular interest in the 'informal' ties and networks underlying these groups. Marriage alliances, business links, patronage networks, and, more recently, ties of trust and 'social capital' have been seen as accounting for the cohesion and nature of such groups, and as offering a crucial window onto the bases of political action.[3] This approach has greatly expanded our knowledge of political associations in late medieval cities, but one of its consequences has been to make generalizations difficult. First, it is often hard to understand why certain types of groups were more powerful in one city rather than another, or why some were more likely to engage in a particular form of conflict than another. Second, and related to the first point, distinguishing whether groups forged through 'informal' bonds were political or not is difficult: clearly, not every family unit or business network became involved in collective political action, nor did their ties necessarily generate a shared political outlook.

Marxist approaches to this same issue have been rather more alert to the problem of generalization and comparison. Within a Marxist analytical framework, the most fundamental action groups in political conflict, especially in revolts, were those stemming from social classes which were

[3] See Heers, *Parties and Political Life*; Kent, *Household and Lineage*; Kent, *Rise of the Medici*; Haemers, 'Factionalism and State Power'; Braekevelt *et al.*, 'Politics of Factional Conflict'; Padgett and Ansell, 'Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici'.

mobilized for subversive political activities because of worsening economic conditions or because of the increasing self-confidence of late medieval working men in the wake of the Black Death.[4] This structural approach is to be strongly commended for attempting to explain the conditions and causes of political action, and the mechanisms which underlay the mobilization of insurgents in situations of conflict. However, it seems more difficult to assume that class was always the prime structuring force of political action. As the past few decades of research have shown, there was a great multiplicity of action groups in urban politics, and class was often only one among several factors in their creation.[5] As we shall see, the Ciompi revolt itself—often seen as the paradigmatic example of a class revolt—was driven by a coalition which was formed across classes. It brought together patrician families, guilds, and unenfranchised workers, while the 'lower-class' component of the coalition fell apart when the Ciompi broke away from the main coalition in August 1378. None of this detracts from the possibility that social class could and did represent one possible basis of political action. However, because other factors were also at work it seems difficult to uphold an exclusively class-based framework to account for the types of groups which were involved in conflict and revolt.

In what follows, a structural perspective is brought to bear on the analysis of action groups. These did not exist in a vacuum and were directly conditioned by pre-existing forms of organization the resources and infrastructure of which city dwellers necessarily tapped.[6] This could include informal mechanisms of interaction, such as taverns, but a particularly important role was played by the city's multiple political units. Over the centuries, guilds, neighbourhoods, and other bodies had crystallized around the governance and management of political, legal, economic, and military resources. Many of them also had access to and enjoyed a regularized role in the jurisdictional organization of the city as a whole. All this meant that politically active city dwellers had much to gain from associating themselves with and building their networks around such units. It is important to make an analytical distinction between these political units and the action groups that could form around them. Political units,

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[4] Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free*, 25–62; Rutenburg, 25–88; Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, 205–27.

[5] Dumolyn and Haemers, 'Patterns of Urban Rebellion', 382–5; Haemers, *De Gentse opstand*, 62–118; Haemers, *For the Common Good?*, 153–85, 236–42; Rotz, 'Investigating Urban Uprisings', 217–20. This incidentally was also pointed out by Marxist scholars such as Czok in 'Zunftkämpfe, Zunftrevolutionen oder Bürgerkämpfe', 142.

[6] For the social science scholarship on this issue, see Della Porta and Diani, *Social Movements*, 114–62; Meyer, 'Protest and Political Opportunities'; Kriesi, 'Political Context and Opportunity'; Edwards and McCarthy, 'Resources and Social Movement Mobilization'.

especially those of a corporate nature, did not necessarily correspond to cohesive and stable groups that also acted together on the political stage. Sometimes this was, of course, the case, but it was also possible for the infrastructure and resources of such institutions to be captured by splinter groups or complete outsiders. The mere fact of being the member of a particular guild did not, therefore, mean that a guildsman necessarily acted with or even supported his guild, although he may well have done so.

Three types of action groups will be distinguished on the basis of their relationship with the city's political units:

- those developing around corporations such as guilds and other groups taking on a quasi-corporate character,
- factions and parties, which were long-standing action groups and sometimes constituted organizational units in their own right,
- coalitions, which gathered around numerous different political units, but were short-lived and volatile associations.

Action groups did not have equal power. Coalitions were most likely to engage in urban warfare, while more permanent groups were frequently involved in other forms of conflict. As a consequence of their different underlying patterns of association, action groups, therefore, also differed in respect of two crucial parameters: first, their life-span and durability; second, the forms of conflict in which they tended to get involved.

CORPORATE AND QUASI-CORPORATE ACTION GROUPS

Many of the action groups in late medieval cities crystallized around a range of political units that could be said to enjoy the legal status of a corporation. According to Bartolo da Sassoferrato inhabitants of a similar place, members of the same profession, as well as scholars and people gathering for a religious purpose all had the right to form distinct corporations.[7] These held jurisdictional powers whose precise nature varied from case to case, but usually involved the election of syndics or other representatives, the holding of jurisdiction over the corporation's members, as well as the possibility of enacting rules in the corporation's area of competence. In addition to this jurisdictional infrastructure, corporations disposed of other resources: they could own property,

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[7] Bartolo da Sassoferrato, *Bartoli interpretum iuris civilis coryphaei in ius universum civile commentaria*, III, 778–81 (Dig. XLVII.22.4).

controlled often significant financial resources, and, because they sometimes played a military role, may have also had access to weapons and matériel.[8]

However, while the conceptualization of corporations in legal thought has received considerable attention, the practice of corporate politics is less well-studied.[9] Particularly against the older historiography, which has emphasized the orderly, cohesive, and legal character of corporations, three points need to be made. First, although they strengthened sociability in some respects, corporations did not reduce levels of political conflict. Because they disposed of infrastructure and resources, corporations were attractive poles around which action groups could organize themselves for the conduct of conflict. An interesting example is the way in which butchers in different cities could use the resources of their guilds to engage in a variety of different modes of conflict. The butchers of Lille, as we have seen, protested against the highly controversial rules of admission to the butchers' trade by using their guild to mount a legal challenge before the urban government.[10] In neighbouring Tournai, guilds had been banned in 1367 but continued to operate underground. In the 1380s butchers brought a legal suit against the urban government's controversial decision to build a second market for the sale of meat before the Paris *Parlement*. When a guild revolt broke out in Tournai in June 1423, the butchers met separately as a corporate group and joined the coalition. Indeed, two of the leading butchers in the 1380s case—Jean Autoupet and Sohier Groul—became important political figures in the insurgent coalition, although Sohier fell out with the regime in 1425.[11] In Liège, the butchers' guild played an important role in the city's frequent urban warfare, not least because of the military role which it and the city's other guilds continued to play. As part of a larger insurgent coalition, Liège's butchers were involved in an attempted revolt by the Datin family in January 1433, when they mobilized supporters alongside the tanners, miners, and drapers to occupy the city's market square under the pennon of their guild. This pennon, in fact, performed an important military function in this stand-off.

[8] Black, *Guilds and Civil Society*, 12–31.

[9] For the historiography on guilds, which has predominantly focused on legal issues, see the Introduction, p. 8 n. 22. But for works focusing on practice, see Prak *et al., Craft Guilds*; Epstein and Prak, *Guilds, Innovation and the European Economy*; Lambrechts and Sosson, *Les métiers*; Epstein, *Wage Labor and Guilds*; Rosser, 'Crafts, Guilds and the Negotiation of Work'; Reininghaus, *Zunftlandschaften im Vergleich*.

[10] See Chapter 2, pp. 45–6.

[11] Hocquet, 'Sur la petite boucherie', 213–19; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 190, 256, 310–13, 340–1; *TR*, II, 73, 142; *Chronique*, 378.

When the guild's standard-bearer panicked and threw down the pennon, the butcher Henri Reverseis quickly took possession of it so that the remainder of the guild would not disperse in the face of their advancing opponents.[12]

The second point about corporations is that action groups rallying around them were not always, nor even necessarily, coherent and stable bodies. There was, in fact, no straightforward relationship between the existence of a particular corporation and the political activities of its members. Action groups could sometimes comprise the corporation's entire membership, but often they were constituted by networks which existed within the corporation or across several other units. This is notoriously difficult to study, but the records of Bologna's most prominent guild, the notaries (*Societas Notariorum*), allows at least a glimpse. The *Societas* had an elaborate political structure, because it chose its own captains, called *correttori*, and two councils, the *Consiglio Corporale* and the *Quaranta.* The notaries also played a prime role in communal politics, although this was progressively reduced after peaking in the later thirteenth century.[13] The degree to which the notaries represented a united action group in communal politics varied greatly. In March 1376, the notarial guild played an important role in supporting Bologna's revolt against the papal legate. Although it is impossible to say how large this group was, it is likely that it comprised a significant proportion of the membership. In fact, individuals from at least twenty families which held leadership functions in the guild were directly involved.[14] They had good reasons: the guild's pre-eminence was reaffirmed after the revolt when the notaries obtained statutory leadership in the newly-established communal council of guild leaders (*massari*), and the guild now also heavily invested in reforming its own organization, drawing up new statutes, and building a new palace.[15]

On other occasions, the notarial guild was a far from united body. The records of its two councils reveal opposition to measures proposed by the guild's *correttori* in the 1380s and 1390s. This included a vote on 19 June 1386 in which a reform of the guild's entry fee—always a contentious

[12] Stavelot, 303.   [13] Tamba, *Una corporazione per il potere*, 199–353.
[14] These families were the Angelelli, d'Argele, Bentivoglio, Bianchetti, Bottrigari, Fantuzzi, Galesii, Ghislieri, Griffoni, Lambertini, Liazzari, Manzoli, Mezzavacca, Osteggiani, Poeti, dalla Ratta, Sabadini, Salamoni, Talamazzi, and Zambeccari: *Cronologia delle famiglie nobili di Bologna*, 215, 299, 358–9, 409, 413, 440, 512, 632, 721–2; *Corpus*, 307, 316, 319; Griffoni, 72; Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 19–21, 44, 76. Members of these families held leadership functions as *correttori* of the notarial guild in 1381–1416: ASB, Società dei Notai, 23, fos. 99r–104r.
[15] ASB, Società dei Notai, 18, fos. 1r–1v; *Haec sunt Statuta*, 144–5.

issue—only won by 68:48 votes in the *Consiglio Corporale*.[16] These disagreements foreshadowed a major crisis in September 1393. In this month, scandal broke out over the election of the guild's two *correttori* when the officials in charge of supervising the election were accused of rigging the vote. As one of the officials, Liazzaro Liazzari, was at this point a supporter of Ugolino Scappi, a leading figure in the Maltraversi party, it seemed that the Maltraversi had tried to manipulate an election in the city's most important guild. Bologna's government, then controlled by opponents of the Maltraversi, reacted promptly: it removed several Maltraversi from communal office, exiled two of their leaders, and intervened directly in the notarial guild's politics by confirming the election of two candidates from the rival Scacchesi party to the office of *correttore*.[17] Partisan divisions which affected the whole of Bologna, therefore, also reached inside the notarial guild. Internal friction, in fact, continued after the commune's intervention. In a very unusual move, the guild appointed a third *correttore* on 27 October 1393 because one of the present *correttori* was said to be so heavily involved in communal politics that he could not carry out his office 'to the great damage and prejudice (*ad maximum damnum et preiudicium*)' of the guild. An additional *correttore* needed to be appointed to restore the guild's 'peaceful status (*statum pacificum*)'—for good reason, because relations in the notarial guild had turned out not to be peaceful at all.[18]

The third point to consider is that action groups did not necessarily enjoy the formal status of a corporation, but could nevertheless use existing institutions in a similar way. Major families, for instance, often organized around jurisdictional units, and thereby resembled corporate groups, which were themselves often only loosely connected to their institutions. In Italy, families even enjoyed a quasi-legal status because they were acknowledged as *consorterie* and the subject of legislation against magnates or the accumulation of offices (known as *divieto*).[19] It is a truism, but easy to forget, that wealth, business links, and marriage ties were only one part of the story behind a major family's political success. The more families were able to organize around various political units in the city, the more powerful they tended to be. An interesting case study is that of the Datin family who, in the first decades of the fifteenth century, were

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[16] ASB, Società dei Notai, 18, fo. 33r. Other cases are in ASB, Società dei Notai, 18, fos. 44v (*Consiglio Corporale*, 9 November 1388: 64:42 votes), 54r (*Quaranta*, 20 December 1391: 45:22 votes).
[17] *Corpus*, 449–51; Griffoni, 85.   [18] ASB, Società dei Notai, 18, fo. 62v.
[19] See Heers, *Family Clans*, 231–7 and passim; Mineo, 'Stati e lignaggi'. Some of the best studies of this subject are on Florence: Kent, *Household and Lineage*, 5–8, 164–226; Klapisch-Zuber, *Retour à la cité*, 18–25, 145–92.

able to become Liège's most influential political players. Their fortune was crucially connected to the misfortune of Liège, which had been deprived of nearly its entire municipal and guild organization after the revolt of the Hédroits had been put down in 1408. The Datins had themselves played an ambiguous role in that revolt, but soon re-established themselves as an important force by seeking control over the remaining power bases of the urban arena.[20]

In the aftermath of the revolt, the Datins started building close relations with the successive prince-bishops of Liège, John of Bavaria, John of Wallenrode, and John of Heinsberg. This made it possible, after the restoration of certain municipal privileges in 1418, for Walthier Datin to monopolize the échevinage, the city's chief tribunal, the members of which were appointed by the prince-bishop for life. As we shall see, the Datins' eventual loss of control over this institution in 1430 would also precipitate the family's downfall.[21] In their rise to power, the Datins also relied on Liège's ecclesiastical institutions, which were especially important political players in the prince-bishopric. While many benefices in Liège were held by outsiders, members of the Datins controlled benefices in at least three of the seven collegiate churches as well as in the cathedral chapter of Saint-Lambert, although the Datins' relationship with the latter was often tense.[22] In the wake of the Datins' troubled relations with rival political groups such connections came in handy. In 1426, the collegiate church of Saint-Jean l'Évangéliste offered Walthier Datin shelter when the city's *bourgmestres* and canons of Saint-Lambert chased him to bring him before an ecclesiastical court over the controversial installation of his son Lambert as a canon of the cathedral chapter. Following the Datins' failed attempt to take over the city in 1433, Saint-Lambert, Saint-Séverin, and Saint-Servais, as well as the Franciscan church all offered followers of the Datins at least temporary shelter.[23] One further political resource was at the Datins' disposal. As lord of Jeneffe and Jehay, Walthier Datin controlled communities in Liège's immediate hinterland and also accrued considerable economic resources through his investment in mining. The Datins' coup of 1433 was, in fact, supported by the miners' guild

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[20] The Datins may have supported the Hédroits, but managed to dissociate themselves: Stavelot, 79, 99, 109, 234; *LR*, III, 116. For the Datins, see also Xhayet, *Réseaux de pouvoir*, 141–2, 172–3, 347–50.

[21] Stavelot, 160–1, 164–8, 326; *Le chapitre de Saint-Lambert*, II, 202.

[22] In addition to Saint-Lambert, members of the Datin family held benefices at Saint-Martin, Saint-Jean l'Évangéliste, and Sainte-Croix: Stavelot, 110, 320–4; 'La collégiale de Saint-Martin', 110; *Inventaire analytique des chartes de la collégiale de Saint-Jean l'Évangéliste*, I, lii–liii, 371; *Inventaire analytique des chartes de la collégiale de Sainte-Croix*, I, lxxxviii, 447; *Le chapitre de Saint-Lambert*, I, xvii, II, 197–8, 202, III, 19.

[23] Stavelot, 236, 304–5.

when Walthier harboured some one hundred men-at-arms from the surrounding localities of Ains, Molins, Montegnée, and Grase in his house at Liège.[24] By this stage, the Datins had also acquired the backing of the duke of Burgundy, whose war with the prince-bishop of Liège between 1430 and 1431 they had secretly supported. After the Datins' failed coup attempt, the duke offered a gift of 2,000 *écus d'or* as well as shelter to the Datins, and intervened with the Liège authorities to lift the confiscation on the family's goods.[25]

The Datins, therefore, functioned not unlike corporate action groups: they sought to maximize their control of power bases in the political arena and thereby to become a significant force in urban politics. Although not a 'legal' corporation in the strict sense of the term, they made ample use of the jurisdictional powers associated with existing political units. Their opponents, in fact, soon accused them of accumulating too much power. Through their hold on the échevinage, the Datins were able to send opponents on forced pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela, extorted money from exiles, and levied unfair taxes. Their access to multiple political units had made them guilty, in the words of a later investigation, of 'selling law and justice (*vendre la loy et la justiche*)'.[26]

FACTIONS AND PARTIES

Factions and parties were, in a certain sense, a particular type of corporate or quasi-corporate action group, and were known under the names of *pars-parte, brigata, setta-sect-section*, or *partijlichede*. Like corporate action groups they were established players within urban politics, but they were usually larger and often developed their own mechanisms to dominate public life. They were different from the *ad hoc* coalitions which will be analysed in the next section. First, they tended to have a more constant membership than these more fleeting forms of political association. Second, factions and parties often played a more regularized role in urban politics. Their members could use a variety of existing mechanisms to pursue conflicts, whereas coalitions needed to resort to high-level forms of violence more quickly to have an effect on the political process. Although

[24] Stavelot, 286–7, 296, 302–3, 309–13, 328. For all of the Datins' territories, see Walthier's will in *Documents relatifs aux troubles du pays de Liège*, 426–34. At Montegnée the Datins headed the échevinage, which was jurisdictionally subject to the cathedral chapter: Ponthir, *Histoire de Montegnée et Berleur*, 120, 126.
[25] Stavelot, 244–5, 431; Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, II, 287.
[26] Stavelot, 183–6 (at 185). For other accusations made against the Datins, see Stavelot, 236, 243, 327; Zantfliet, cols. 423–4.

factions and parties were much maligned by moralist commentators for their role in generating and perpetuating friction, they were often a permanent part of urban society.[27]

Jurists—always close to political practice—recognized the role of parties as important elements of the body politic. In his *Tractatus de guelfis et gebellinis*, written in 1355 possibly as a legal opinion for the Umbrian city of Todi, Bartolo da Sassoferrato broadly affirmed that a party (*pars*) is lawful (*licitus*) when 'it aims principally at the public good in order that the city should be rightly and peacefully governed'.[28] Bartolo acknowledged that no honest man would seek division (*divisio*) or fissure (*scissura*) except for a weighty reason (*magna causa*), but parties could resist and depose regimes when these were ruled by tyrannical governments, when it was not possible to have recourse to the law courts of a superior judge, and when the aim was not to impose a new tyranny, but to restore the *status quo*.[29] Baldo degli Ubaldi even regarded parties as quasi-legal institutions: they could pass their own statutes, and if a party became the majority (*maior pars*) in a city, it ceased to be a partisan body and could take measures binding the whole city. Baldo went so far as to say that even when a party was exiled, its statutes and decisions would still be valid.[30] This quasi-legal status of parties even found its reflection in courtroom practices—as Marco Gentile has found, Bartolo's legal criteria for determining the membership of an individual in a specific party were used in a trial in Parma in 1482 to determine which adherents to the local Rossi faction (which claimed to have a Guelf identity) were liable to pay an indemnity to the duke of Milan for a failed revolt.[31]

The durability and political legitimacy of these political formations was often related to their ability to build their own jurisdictional presence in the city or even to monopolize particular sectors of urban politics. Almost always, factions were also held together by, or were even formed on account of, economic and social ties between their members, but the question of factions' access to the city's political process was paramount for their survival. These political channels played a crucial role in holding factions together, because it is through such channels that their members hoped to gain influence over urban political developments. The Italian term *parte* (pl. *parti*) was, in fact, used for factions which existed over some

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[27] My view is similar to that laid out in Gentile, 'Factions and Parties'.

[28] 'tendens principaliter ad bonum publicum, ut civitas recte et quiete gubernetur', Bartolo da Sassoferrato, 'Tractatus de guelfis et gebellinis', 137. See also Ullmann, 'Medieval Theory of Legal and Illegal Organizations'.

[29] Bartolo da Sassoferrato, 'Tractatus de guelfis et gebellinis', 137–40.

[30] Canning, *Political Thought of Baldus*, 153–4.

[31] Gentile, 'Bartolo in pratica', 244–6.

length of time and which often enjoyed a particular public role. It seems, therefore, apt to use the term 'party' whenever the sources speak of *parti*, although I will use 'faction' on all other occasions. In what follows, different types of factions and their relationship with urban political organization will be discussed by drawing on examples from Liège, Bologna, and Florence: relatively durable factions; long-lived factions which disintegrated; and long-lived factions which continued to thrive.

Relatively durable factions did not necessarily have particularly long histories or even specific names. A relevant example are the families who opposed the Datin family's increasing concentration of power in Liège and came to constitute a faction that in the end long outlasted the Datins' hold on power. Constituted by many families, rather than dominated by the members of one overbearing family, this faction was able to establish itself as a viable political force by building a network that came to dominate the city's core political institutions. First and foremost, they virtually monopolized the city's principal political office, the two annually elected *bourgmestres*. Anti-Datinists held this position nineteen times out of a total of thirty-two terms of office between 1417 and 1431. By contrast, men explicitly identifiable with the Datins only became *bourgmestres* between five and eight times in the same period.[32] It is not surprising that they needed the jurisdictional resources associated with the office of *bourgmestre*, because this allowed them to form a counterweight to the Datins who had monopolized the échevinage. Second, the anti-Datin faction also received support from the majority of the city's guilds who played an important part in the election of *bourgmestres*. The guilds had every reason to side with the anti-Datinists, because they had been alienated by the Datins' unsuccessful attempt, in May 1418, to prevent their privileges from being restored by the prince-bishop. Their stance towards the Datins may have become even less favourable when, in July 1424, a reform commission transferred the power to elect the *bourgmestres* to an electoral committee which was composed by guildsmen, but appointed by the reform commission itself. Of Liège's sixteen representatives on this latter commission, at least five can be identified as Datin followers.[33] Their ability to monopolize particular urban political

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[32] The anti-Datinist *bourgmestres* (brackets indicate the number of terms of office) were François de Bierset (4), Eustache Chabot (1), Henri delle Chaussée (2), Claes delle Chièvre (1), Walthier de Fléron (3), Alexandre de Seraing (1), Gilbert de Seraing (3), and Fastré Baré Surlet (4). The Datinist *bourgmestres* were Gilles de Bierset (2), Walthier Datin (1), Wilhem Datin (4), and Engelbert de Herstat (1). Note that the cases of both Engelbert and Gilles are ambiguous. Compiled on the basis of Stiennon, *Histoire de Liège*, 322; Stavelot, 242, 290, 306–8, 311, 315, 320–4.

[33] Stavelot, 164–6; *LO*, 538–48. The five Datinists were Gilles de Metz, Johan de Sarazin, Henri Sollo, Renkin Urbain, and Sandron li jonne. Only two members of the

units gave the anti-Datin faction access to a variety of jurisdictional pow-
ers. Not only could they rely on elections to seek influence, they also
had the possibility of using petitions to express their protest. In 1429,
following an incident involving a blacksmith, the *bourgmestres*, the guild
of blacksmiths, and other guilds challenged the échevinage in a petition
in which they demanded a charter of rights and a clarification on sev-
eral privileges. The petitioners' catalogue of questions revolved particu-
larly around the powers of the échevinage and provocatively asked if the
échevins treasured the common good as was expected of them in Liège's
imperial charter. The échevinage, under the leadership of Walthier Datin,
refused to answer, but this only led to a further escalation of the con-
flict. First, the guilds went on strike. Then, in July of the same year, the
two *bourgmestres* were mysteriously poisoned and needed to be replaced.
One year later, Walthier Datin fell out with the échevinage, which then
finally responded to the petitioners' concerns in September 1430.[34] Built
around the office of *bourgmestre* and the guilds, the anti-Datin faction
became a major political player in its own right. As we shall see, the anti-
Datinists continued to be an important political force, which, particu-
larly thanks to the military power of the guilds, also successfully defeated
the Datins' attempt to take over the city in 1433. They later also became
the main group to oppose the pro-Burgundian prince-bishop Louis of
Bourbon in the 1450s and 1460s.[35]

Factions were often fractious bodies. The main parties (*parti*) of
Bologna in this period existed for nearly the entire fourteenth century,
but often fragmented into splinter groups. Unlike Liège's factions of the
fifteenth century, the Maltraversi and Scacchesi parties of Bologna had
no regularized political framework around which they could organize.
They had originally crystallized in the early fourteenth century in a con-
test between the Pepoli and Gozzadini families over the control of the
city, and respectively represented (if only in very rough approximation)
divisions between Bologna's magnates and forces of the *popolo.* However,
throughout the century, the swift succession of different regimes with dif-
ferent constitutions made it difficult for these parties to find a stable role
in the political process. By the end of the century, the Maltraversi and

commission, Johan de Bernalmont and Andrieu de Haccourt, were associated with the
anti-Datin faction.

[34] Stavelot, 242–3; Zantfliet, cols. 423–4. The petition and the response is in *LR*, III,
253–65. The petition was formally submitted 'in the name of the whole city (*en nom de tout
le citeit*)', but Stavelot explains that this was a joint effort of *bourgmestres* and guilds.

[35] On the guilds' role in 1430–3, see Chapter 5, p. 112. For the years after 1433, Xhayet,
Réseaux de pouvoir, 350–4, 360–1.

Scacchesi only vaguely reflected their original aims and composition.[36]
In March 1376, the parties joined forces to expel the papal legate and
re-establish the commune, but this rare case did not put an end to the
high levels of uncertainty in Bolognese politics.[37] The new regime was, in
fact, soon challenged by various party-related groups, which clearly saw an
advantage in acting autonomously from, or even directly challenging, rival
groups within their own camps. In September 1376, some Maltraversi
were discovered to have plotted against the commune with the marquis
of Ferrara. Although five of them were executed, several others benefited
from a commutation of their sentence, which Taddeo Azzoguidi, a leader
of the rival Scacchesi party, pushed through the commune a month later.[38]
Azzoguidi was, in fact, pursuing his own plans. In December, he and his
associates split their own party with a proposal to allow the Pepoli fam-
ily, who had ruled Bologna as signori between 1337 and 1350, back into
town. After two of Azzoguidi's associates brought the proposal unsuccess-
fully before Bologna's communal councils, another supporter, Ugolino
Balduini, besieged the house of the *gonfaloniere* Giacomo Griffoni, who
happened to be a Scacchese himself. Battles broke out between partisans
of Azzoguidi and their former Scacchesi allies, who now also acquired
the name of Raspanti.[39] Eventually, the challengers were banished, but
they continued to divide the Bolognese body politic. After allying with
major power-holders in the contado of Bologna, they proceeded to levy
a full-scale war against the commune.[40] This created great resentment
in Bologna, where the guilds led a revolt against the Raspanti regime in
mid-March 1377. The whole Scacchesi party had, in fact, increasingly
come into disrepute. Ten days before the revolt, one of their allies who
was still in Bologna, Leonardo Liazzari, had already warned, in a letter
jointly addressed to Taddeo Azzoguidi and Taddeo Pepoli, that the *popolo*
of Bologna was much displeased about the party's activities. In a separate
missive, Liazzari tried to persuade Taddeo Pepoli that he should dissociate
himself from Azzoguidi because there would be a risk that the party (*par-
tida*) would otherwise fall apart.[41] There was some truth to his warning,

[36] Dondarini, *Bologna medievale*, 231–7; Palmieri, *I Maltraversi*, 11–13 and passim. On
previous partisan divisions in Bologna, see Milani, *L'esclusione dal comune*, esp. 377–99;
Vitale, *Il dominio della parte guelfa*, 141–86.
[37] See Chapter 5, pp. 125–6.
[38] *Corpus*, 310–12, 325–7; Griffoni, 73–4; Stefani, 299–300; ASB, PS, 22, fos. 56r–71r.
See also Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 40.
[39] *Corpus*, 311–13, 329–31; Griffoni, 74. See also Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 46–7.
[40] See Chapter 5, pp. 122–3.
[41] ASB, PS, 22, fos. 124r–127v. On the revolt of March 1377, which is very badly docu-
mented: *Corpus*, 313, 317–18, 331; Griffoni, 74.

because similarly centrifugal tendencies would characterize the activities of the Scacchesi in subsequent decades. Splinter groups or breakaway groups led by specific leaders were normally involved in each of the revolts in the city until the end of the century. Nine families associated with the Scacchesi activities of 1376 and 1377 were again accused of involvement in a plot to return the Pepoli to Bologna in May 1386, while uprisings by splinter groups led by the Ramponi, Gozzadini, and Bentivoglio shook Bolognese politics between 1399 and 1401.[42] Unsurprisingly, by the fifteenth century, the names of the original parties had all but disappeared from the records.[43]

The most cohesive and enduring factions were, in fact, those which were able to acquire a more or less regularized role in the political organization of the city. Into this category fall the Guelf and Ghibelline parties in certain Italian cities, and the Hoeken and Kabeljauwen in Holland, networks which continued to operate both as supra-regional and urban political players throughout the late Middle Ages.[44] Especially in Lombard and Emilian cities, different *squadre* and *parti* led by particular families were represented through quota arrangements on communal councils or embassies, and often maintained networks across several cities.[45] The Parte Guelfa of Florence can serve as a particularly interesting example of a long-lasting party which was embedded in the city's politics. The Parte had its origins in the political convulsions brought about by the collapse of imperial power and the invasion of Italy by Charles of Anjou in the mid-thirteenth century, and continued to remain a rallying point for many Florentines, particularly those with connections to the papacy. Although the Parte's leadership was dominated by magnates as well as various other major families, there were remarkable fluctuations of wealth among its members, which also included minor guildsmen.[46] The Parte's

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[42] For 1386, see *Corpus*, 377–81; Griffoni, 80–1; ASB, Capitano del Popolo, 824, fos. 2r–34r; ASB, Provvigioni in capreto, 3, fo. 17r. The participants were members from the Caccianemici, Liazzari, Lombardi, da Panico, Papazoni, Pepoli, Sassoni, as well as Ferrante di Bonaventura and Nannino di Checche. For 1399–1401, by which time the Maltraversi party was similarly fragmented into splinter groups, Chapter 5, pp. 115–17.

[43] I have only found occasional references to the Maltraversi in the early fifteenth century: *Corpus*, 481, 492–4, 499; Griffoni, 92, 100.

[44] For Guelfs and Ghibellines, see the contributions in Gentile, *Guelfi e ghibellini*; Ferente, 'Guelphs!'; for a later period, Ferente, *Gli ultimi guelfi*. On the Hoeks and Kabeljauwen, see the contributions in Marsilje, *Bloedwraak, partijstrijd en pacificatie*; ter Braake, 'Parties and Factions'.

[45] Gentile, 'Factions and Parties', 310–20; the best-studied case is Parma for which see Gentile, *Fazioni al governo*.

[46] Mazzoni, *Accusare e proscrivere il nemico politico*, 106–20. For an assessment of the wealth of 245 Parte officials taxed in the *catasto* of 1427, see Finiello Zervas, *Parte Guelfa, Brunelleschi and Donatello*, 55: three were taxed for a gross income of above 50,000 florins

membership was remarkably stable: Diane Finiello Zervas has found that forty-nine of the families involved in Parte politics in the early fifteenth century had already been affiliated with it in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, and that a further thirty-five families had been Parte players by the middle of the fourteenth century.[47] The Parte Guelfa could even weather what was perhaps the most profound crisis of Florentine politics, the Ciompi revolt. Although the Parte had undergone some internal divisions in May and early June 1378, it remained remarkably stable throughout the whole conflict. Of the thirty-five families identified as the inner core of the Parte at the beginning of the revolt, all but two still appear among the Parte's most salient political players in 1382, when the regime of 1378 was brought down. This, as we shall see in the next section, contrasted sharply with the internal convulsions the Ciompi coalition itself underwent.[48]

The Parte Guelfa's relative stability was closely connected to its status as one of the city's main political units. A reflection of this was the impressive institutional apparatus of the *Universitas Guelforum*, as the Parte was formally known. Its political structure mirrored that of the commune: like the commune, the Parte's 'government' was headed by nine men (*capitani*) and two advisory colleges (the fifteen-strong *Priori di Pecunia* and the twenty-strong *Secretarii della Credenza*), and also possessed two legislative councils (the *Sessanta* and *Cento*). As for communal positions, quotas applied for the distribution of offices among major and minor guildsmen, although in the Parte one quarter of offices were reserved for magnates who had been excluded from office-holding in the Florentine commune since 1293. Apart from its political leverage, the Parte was also extremely wealthy. It disposed of fifty-nine properties within Florence itself as well as twenty-six in the contado, and from 1426 also became an important investor in the city's publicly-funded debt, the *Monte*, through which it nearly managed to double its annual revenues.[49]

Unlike other factions, the Parte did not need to rely on monopolizing other political units in the city. Over time, it had itself become a powerful institution in its own right. Between 1267 and 1280, the Parte

and twenty-seven for a gross income of between 10,000 and 50,000 florins, while three quarters were taxed below 4,500 florins and one third below 900 florins.

[47] Finiello Zervas, *Parte Guelfa, Brunelleschi and Donatello*, 53–4.

[48] The two families are the Baroncelli and Giammori. For the core of the Parte in 1378, Stefani, 317–18. For that of 1382, Stefani, 403–5, 412–14. For divisions within the Parte in 1378, see Stefani, 316–17; *Diario*, 354–6.

[49] Finiello Zervas, *Parte Guelfa, Brunelleschi and Donatello*, 62–74, 201–30, 386–410. For the Parte's constitution, ASF, Parte Guelfa (numeri rossi), 3, fos. 1r–6v.

Guelfa had formed part of the Florentine government and, even after it had lost this position, it enjoyed a public role in Florentine governance: its rules and regulations were protected by ample autonomy from communal legislation, and the Parte became an apparatus to police the 'true Guelf' character of all of Florence's office-holders by sponsoring legislation against Ghibellines. To bypass the judicial procedures necessary to convict Ghibellines, from 1358 the Parte captains, afforced from 1366 by a college of twenty-four members drawn from Parte ranks, claimed for themselves the power to proscribe (*ammonire*) all those citizens who were considered un-Guelf and to force them into resigning all their communal offices. Hitting 248 citizens between 1358 and 1378, this effectively gave the Parte control over the Florentine office-holding class and turned it into a quasi-legal body.[50] In his *Laudatio florentinae urbis* (*c.*1403–4), Leonardo Bruni—who also compiled new statutes for the Parte in 1420—even compared the Parte Guelfa to the censors of Rome, the Aeropagus of Athens, or the ephors of Sparta all of whom had a major constitutional stake in the governance of their respective cities.[51]

The lead-up to the Ciompi revolt provides an effective illustration of how the Parte's powers allowed its membership both to rally around this institution and to confront their opponents. Between 1375 and 1378, Florence, alongside hundreds of other central Italian towns and cities, had been embroiled in a highly unusual war with Pope Gregory XI, known as the War of the Eight Saints.[52] For Florence, this war drove a deep wedge between the pope and one of Italy's traditionally most 'Guelf' and pro-papal cities: the pope laid an interdict on the city, withdrew its episcopal title, indicted forty-nine citizens, and proclaimed the *Otto di Guerra*—the Florentine war committee—heretics, while the Florentines confiscated all ecclesiastical property, levied a forced loan among priests, and obliged those clerics who had not left to break the interdict. Although leading Parte figures initially backed the war, they were also discomfited by what they saw as an erosion of the Parte's traditional political orientation. Many Parte families had close connections to the curia or held benefices in Florence, and both the papal interdict and Florentine anti-clerical legislation may have hit them disproportionately hard. The misgivings of Parte members came to a head in the autumn of 1377, when the commune passed a harsh law to break the papal interdict and forced recalcitrant

[50] Mazzoni, *Accusare e proscrivere il nemico politico*, 130–4, 203–42.
[51] Leonardo Bruni, 'Laudatio florentinae urbis', 262.
[52] Lewin, *Negotiating Survival*, 39–56; Peterson, 'War of the Eight Saints'; Gherardi, 'La guerra dei fiorentini'. For the lead-up to this war, see Partner, 'Florence and the Papacy', 112–17.

clerics to return to the city.[53] By December 1377, Parte leaders for the first time asked for the dissolution of the anti-papal league and an immediate end to the war at a meeting of the city's *pratiche*. In the words of the Parte leader Lapo da Castiglionchio, Florence was leading a war 'with an invincible enemy who, even if driven out of Italy, will prevail both *de facto* and *de iure*'. Rumours soon circulated that certain Florentines had passed on official secrets to the papal court, and the Parte was an obvious candidate to be blamed for this.[54]

The Parte leadership soon turned to the instrument of *ammonizioni*, which it had already used to oust its opponents over the previous decades. In the two and a half years between April 1375 and 1 October 1377, the Parte had already proscribed thirty-four individuals. After the Parte came out against the war in the autumn of 1377, this number was to rise dramatically when a further eighty-four individuals were proscribed in the nine months before the beginning of the Ciompi revolt—a five-fold increase of the average number of *ammonizioni* per month.[55] The Parte, in fact, intensified its proscription policy after the death of Pope Gregory XI in late March 1378, when the prospects of peace seemed even more real. It proscribed twenty-five citizens in the following three months, including on 22 April 1378 Giovanni Dini, a member of the Florentine war committee, who had clashed with a Parte representative on the same committee.[56] A week later, the Parte also took the unprecedented step of proscribing four Florentines who were due to start as office-holders in the Florentine Signoria on 1 May and who, therefore, had to be replaced. Cunningly, they also proscribed Maso di Neri, then a member of the Signoria, in the hope that he could be replaced by a member of the Medici family so that the Parte's arch-enemy and pro-war exponent Salvestro de' Medici would be barred from a two-month stint as *gonfaloniere della giustizia* because of the city's *divieto* legislation, which limited the frequency of the number of offices held by particular families.[57] Members of the Parte Guelfa clearly relied on the relatively extensive jurisdictional powers at their disposal to weaken opponents. This accumulation of power was, after all, what had set the Parte apart from communal politics for more than a century and undoubtedly underlay its continuing appeal as a political *forum* for a particular section of Florentine society. However, their *ammonizione* of Maso di Neri proved a fatal move: it decisively alienated Salvestro de' Medici

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[53] Trexler, *Spiritual Power*, 117–62; Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society*, 297–335.

[54] 'cum hoste invincibili qui quamvis pellatur Italia, tamen maximus remaneat in facto et in iure', ASF, CP, 15, fos. 66r–68r (26 December 1377).

[55] The records on *ammonizioni* are computed from Stefani, 294–5, 300–1, 307–9, 311, 314–17; *Diario*, 346–53, 356, 360–1.

[56] Stefani, 311; *Diario*, 353.   [57] Stefani, 314–16; *Diario*, 353.

and his supporters who were soon looking for new allies to challenge the Parte's unwieldy power.

COALITIONS

Unlike factions, coalitions were action groups which were short-term in character and generally formed on an *ad hoc* basis. Although they relied on the support of existing political units, coalitions usually had little access to established channels of negotiation and were, therefore, most likely to resort to warfare. According to late medieval jurists, the crime of *seditio* involved the formation of armed groups and their engagement in acts of violence or war against a superior authority. This crime was distinguishable from *rebellio*, which merely indicated general acts of resistance.[58] Alarmed at the formation of *convenances* and *allianches, convocationes* and *congregationes*, judicial agencies were always concerned about the formation of new political groupings and gave particular attention to the process by which they could be created. In 1413, for instance, the podestà of Bologna, one of the city's main judicial officers, reported in great detail the negotiations conducted by Gregorio di Massimo di ser Guoro to forge a new alliance with several other citizens—many of them originating in the city's university milieu—to deliver the city to the Malatesta lords of Rimini. According to the podestà, at a secret meeting in his house Gregorio made the bluntest of overtures to the civil lawyer Giovanni Guasconi: 'We intend to free the city of Bologna from the hands of the Church.' Guasconi allegedly replied that he was very satisfied with this plan, but that this effort required a 'good foundation.' With the confidence of the most hard-boiled revolutionary, Gregorio then reportedly reassured Guasconi: 'We have the best foundation. I know others who are very unhappy and who will happily join us.' There was, of course, a considerable element of conjecture in all this, but the podestà was better placed than any other observer to know which type of political formation could become most dangerous for the political order which he was paid to preserve.[59]

The question of 'foundation' was, in fact, crucial. However much coalitions were temporary political formations, and however much jurists and prosecutors wanted to play them down as such, they rarely came out of

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[58] See, for instance, the definitions of *seditio* in Baldo degli Ubaldi, *Consiliorum sive responsorum*, I, fo. 20v (LIX.2) or Jean Boutillier, *Somme rurale*, 170–3 (I.28). See also Sbriccoli, *Crimen laesae maiestatis*, 267–82; Cuttler, *Law of Treason and Treason Trials*, 21–2.

[59] 'Intendimus ad liberandam civitatem Bononie de manu Ecclesie', 'Nos habebimus optimum fundamentum. Ego scio aliquos male contentos qui libenter nobiscum erunt',

nowhere. Much of their success hinged on the kinds of resources which they were able to tap, and it is in this context that pre-existing political units were crucial to the formation of coalitions.[60] Their access to a variety of resources made coalitions powerful political players. In fact, most major urban revolts were associated with coalitions which were able to reshape existing political alignments and to regroup a variety of political units in a new way. They were, therefore, least likely to be bound to existing political channels and often acquired the strength to engage in urban warfare. Revolt was, therefore, not so much associated with the activities of existing action groups as with these newly constituted political formations. Two spectacular revolts with altogether different outcomes—the attempted revolt of Walthier Datin in Liège and the Ciompi revolt in Florence—illustrate this point.

The Datins, who knew and manipulated Liège politics so effectively, put themselves at the head of a powerful new coalition when, in the early 1430s, they saw their political position severely threatened. Surprisingly, they sought the support of powerful political units with which they had previously had a rocky relationship—Liège's guilds. The Datins had, in fact, reached the nadir of their power when, in 1430, Walthier Datin had been forced to leave the échevinage in unclear circumstances and was eventually banished from the city. He had not only suffered a blow from his opponents' challenge a year earlier, but was also discredited for supporting the duke of Burgundy in the war which the prince-bishopric was fighting with the duke between March 1430 and December 1431.[61] The Datins already started to realign themselves during the war, when they disrupted military operations by bribing guildsmen and making promises to them. In September 1430, the support of some of the guilds allowed Walthier Datin to return to Liège for twenty-four days until a backlash forced him to flee the city on horseback.[62]

The guilds of Liège had considerable resources and the Datins undoubtedly hoped to tap these. First and foremost, the guilds' role in the elections of *bourgmestres* and their other political functions made them important allies. Undoubtedly to attract their support, the previously hostile Datins turned into champions of the guilds' cause: they now advocated fundamental

ASB, PS, 35, 'Condemnationes (1413–15)', fos. 22r–24v. For the background to this plot, see Chapter 5, p. 108.

[60] I have developed this argument more fully in Lantschner, 'Revolts and the Political Order of Cities'.

[61] Stavelot, 244–5, 252; Zantfliet, cols. 423–4. The Datins had benefited financially from the duke of Burgundy's acquisition, in 1429, of the county of Namur. Liège went to war with Burgundy in 1430–1 over a resulting territorial dispute.

[62] Stavelot, 244–5, 255–6.

changes to the city's constitution and not only asked for the electors of the *bourgmestres* to be chosen from the ranks of the thirty-two guilds, but also demanded that they would be directly elected by the guildsmen themselves. Afforced by supporters from Montegnée, Wilhem Datin and 'his friends from the common people (*ses amis de commun peuple*)'[63] voiced their programme on 2 July 1432, when they occupied the market square and put the *bourgmestres* to flight. Three weeks later, on the day on which the electors of the *bourgmestres* were traditionally selected, Datin followers disrupted the meeting with calls for changes to the electoral procedures. The operation was successful, and Wilhem Datin emerged as one of Liège's two new *bourgmestres*. Although the Datins had tapped the guilds' jurisdictional role, they were less successful in mobilizing large numbers of guildsmen, because only a few of them appear to have attended the election. The extant records of the tanners' guild reveal that its members were split: according to an investigation launched by the guild in April 1433, some nine tanners had supported the Datins in their project to alter the electoral system, but the guild council had previously decided to oppose the initiative.[64]

Half a year later, the Datins fell back on another resource offered to them by some of the guilds. On the night of 5–6 January 1433, the Datins called on the guilds' military infrastructure in an attempt to seize power in the city. As the main organizational unit of the city's militia, guilds had been involved in all of Liège's major wars and disposed of matériel and experienced men-at-arms. In fact, after their abolition in 1408, the guilds had been reconstituted in the form of twelve militia companies in 1416 before their status was fully restored in the following years. The Datins' aim in 1433 was to occupy the market square, and in this enterprise they were supported by men from the miners', drapers', tanners', and butchers' guilds. To lead the battle on the square, some members of the tanners' guild appropriated their guild's banner, and thereby again acted against a decision by the guild's council a few days earlier. The tanners were led by Andrieu de Lairdieu who also constructed a bulwark on the square and for this purpose allegedly drew on his experience in previous military missions. Andrieu, alongside three other tanner leaders—Johan de Namur, Gilles de Namur, and Henri Brech—, also harboured armed men in their houses and operated a network of messengers to co-ordinate operations.[65] In the event, it was not possible to attract the support of the majority of the guilds, which, having mobilized under the banner of the blacksmiths' guild, defeated the Datin coalition in a battle on the market square. The

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[63] Stavelot, 286.   [64] Stavelot, 286–7, 289–90.
[65] Stavelot, 244–5, 255–6, 286, 289, 291–3, 299–300, 302–3; *LR*, III, 271–80; De Spiegeler, 'La draperie de la cité de Liège', 78.

divisions in the guild community, however, sent shock-waves through Liège's urban society. The guilds organized expeditions to burn the houses of Datin supporters, their allies were banished (sixty-seven perpetually and another sixty-eight temporarily), and at least five people were executed in connection with the plot.[66] In a three-day long feast starting on 15 April, the Liégeois ostentatiously celebrated their newly-found unity: under oath the guildsmen formed an alliance (*alloianche*) formally drawn up under the city's great seal, and vowed to commemorate every year on 6 January what became known as the 'great sedition of the Datins (*grant sedition de cheaux Datin*)'.[67]

The Datin coalition's realignment and their attempt to alter the fault-lines of Liège politics clearly shocked contemporaries. However, the foundations on which the Datins built their coalition were provided by existing political units in the city. The formation of such new coalitions did not always end in failure. The most dramatic case is that of the Ciompi revolt when, on 22 July 1378, an insurgent coalition toppled the existing Florentine urban government, formed a new one, and enfranchised virtually the entire male working population. Although often seen as a revolt driven by a particular social class, the real strength of this coalition was not so much derived from conflict between classes as from the coalition's ability to overcome such divisions through a co-ordination of the shared and specific issues which animated the different sub-groups of this coalition.[68] There were three distinct sub-groups to the Ciompi coalition, and it is an indication of their rootedness in ongoing political processes that they were also organized around pre-existing political units.

One important sub-group was represented by the faction around Salvestro de' Medici, which contained some of the most vociferous supporters of Florence's war against the papacy. Hit by the Parte Guelfa's *ammonizioni*, Salvestro and his men were actively trying to limit the Parte's powers and, through a hastily convened *balìa* (special commission) in June, were able to cancel some of the *ammonizioni*.[69] For some, however, these reforms had not gone far enough. The *balìa*—which had also included the Parte's captains—had so far only reviewed all *ammonizioni*

[66] Stavelot, 309–316, 319, 320–4.

[67] Stavelot, 325–32; *Documents relatifs aux troubles du pays de Liège*, 391–7. The phrase is from Stavelot, 317.

[68] The historiography has especially focused on the class character of the insurgent coalition: Rutenburg, *Popolo e movimenti popolari*, 157–330; Cohn, *Laboring Classes*, 129–54; Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi*, 75–97; Screpanti, *L'angelo della liberazione*, 189–307. Brucker, by contrast, has tended to play down the agency of the Ciompi: Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society*, 351–96.

[69] For a summary of the *balìa* proceedings, see Falletti-Fossati, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi*, 331–45.

since September 1377, and had voted to exclude even rehabilitated *ammoniti* from office for a further three years. At least 27 members of Salvestro's faction are documented to have played an important role in the most radical phase of the revolt in July, although the number of their supporters could be augmented if one included the 26 *ammoniti* who had had their applications for a rehabilitation rejected in June; or those 126 *ammoniti* who had their proscriptions cancelled as a result of the coalition's reforms; or indeed all other *ammoniti* who were likely also to join this coalition.[70] It is important to stress that some of those associated with this faction had never held office before and also came from humble social backgrounds, or had only recently entered communal politics. However, many of the families composing this faction were certainly no novel players on the Florentine political scene: together they had already held a total of 634 high-level communal offices between 1282 and June 1378, although of these more than half (355) were held by the four major families of this group (Alberti, Medici, Ricci, and Strozzi).[71]

In June, the faction's operations had been facilitated by the fact that Salvestro de' Medici was also *gonfaloniere della giustizia*, but from July a new urban government, dominated by Parte-leaning figures, came into office. Although a series of negotiations appear to have been conducted, the new *gonfaloniere della giustizia*, Luigi Guicciardini, opposed any further reforms. The faction was forced to seek new supporters and turned to collaborate with guildsmen and workers. It is hard to determine precisely when and how this switch happened from what are obviously highly partisan accounts of the heady days of July 1378. According to the confessions of three captured Ciompi, men around Salvestro de' Medici had actively approached and encouraged them to revolt, although, as we shall see, it is likely that some form of agreement underlay this collaboration. At any rate, by 20 July, the prior Alamanno Acciaiuoli noted with horror how, when the first rebellion had broken out on that day and Salvestro de' Medici and three associates had been sent out to mediate between commune and rebels, they defected to the rebels and instead of 'quelling the rebellion', they actually 'fuelled it'.[72] Unsurprisingly, Richard Trexler has found that it was insurgents from the Medici's quarter of San Giovanni

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[70] For the data, Lantschner, 'Revolts and the Political Order of Cities', 19–20 n. 41.

[71] Calculated on the basis of *Florentine Renaissance Resources*: the Medici had held 81 offices, the Strozzi 119, the Ricci 83, and the Alberti 72. Note that all of these families were divided in their approach to the revolt.

[72] 'I priori avevano mandati questi quattro cittadini . . . ad operare che il romore si spegnesse, e questi medesimi l'accendeano', *Tumulto*, 25 (Acciaioli). For these developments, see *Tumulto*, 19, 22–4 (Acciaioli), 49 (Guicciardini). The *pratiche* meetings of early July are excerpted in *Diario*, 511–12.

and neighbourhoods close to the Medici who played a leading role in this phase of the revolt.[73] A particularly important role was attributed by many chroniclers to the *Otto di Guerra* who, like no other body, were associated with the War of the Eight Saints and the tensions with the Parte Guelfa. Already in June, the *Otto* had allegedly handed the Florentine war banner to protesters who burnt the houses of Parte members. In July at least five of its members actively aided the insurgents, who had invited the *Otto* to a meeting in the parish church of San Barnaba. As the only backbone of the Medici faction in the communal administration, the *Otto* offered crucial institutional support to the coalition when they neglected to organize military defence against the insurgents and even apparently offered themselves as an interim government.[74]

Another crucial component of the July coalition was that which comprised the existing guilds of Florence. As John Najemy has shown, there had already been a revival of political activity within the guild community in the 1370s.[75] Moreover, certain guilds—apparently led by the furriers— had been involved in an occupation of the Piazza della Signoria and in attacks on the houses of Parte leaders in June.[76] While negotiations were going on between the Medici faction and the Parte supporters in early July, the guilds elected syndics, who on 8 July 1378 presented a petition and, in the judgement of Prior Acciaiuoli, 'wanted to spit out the poison which had remained in their bodies'. Their petition asked for a general strengthening of guild influence on the Parte Guelfa and the commune, and contained detailed provisions on limiting the Parte's *ammonizioni* powers by requiring a ratification of proscriptions by the commune. The petition was accepted and turned into law, but the guilds continued to make demands to the urban government, which, on 12 July, was even forced to set up a special committee to negotiate with the syndics of the guilds.[77] When the rebellion broke out on 20 July, guilds were involved from the start, and on 21 July the guild of blacksmiths played a leading role in the coalition's occupation of the palace of the podestà. After the palace had been seized,

[73] Trexler, 'Neighbours and Comrades', 58–9.

[74] *Tumulto*, 15, 20, 22–3, 25, 31–3 (Acciaioli), 49 (Guicciardini), 57 (Nofri), 130 (Strozziana); Stefani, 323, 325–6, 344–5; *Diario*, 511, 513. A particular role appears to have been played by Alessandro de' Bardi, Guccio Gucci, Andrea Salviati, Tommaso Strozzi, and Giovanni di Mone. The only member of the *Otto* who clearly opposed the July coalition was the Parte leader Simone Peruzzi.

[75] Najemy, ' "Audiant Omnes Artes" ', 76–86.

[76] *Diario*, 359–60; Stefani, 318–20; *Tumulto*, 107 (Compagnano).

[77] 'Vollono sputare alcuno veleno ch'era loro rimaso in corpo', *Tumulto*, 17 (Acciaioli); see also *Tumulto*, 57 (Nofri). The petition is published in Falletti-Fossati, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi*, 346–56.

the blacksmiths' banner was raised on its turret, and the flags of the other guilds—except that of the by now excluded wool guild—were hung from the windows of the palace.[78]

  While political relations had become increasingly tense, various pockets of Ciompi and other workers also organized themselves. Between 17 and 18 July 1378, some thirteen rebels met at a place called Ronco, outside the worker-dominated neighbourhood of San Piero Gattolino, to form an association, and also entered into contact with similar groups at other locations in the city.[79] How much the workers could also fall back on pre-existing political units is difficult to tell, but, as historians of the Ciompi have found, neighbourhood ties played an especially important role in their mobilization.[80] Some of these relationships were relatively informal, but others were, crucially for the workers' chances of success, more embedded in the existing framework of Florentine power relations. Parishes, for instance, constituted an important arena for the social, legal, and economic ties of workers, and had fulfilled policing roles for which they had been accountable to the podestà.[81] When one of the Ronco conspirators, Simoncino Bugigatto, was captured one day after the meetings by the Florentine authorities, he confessed that his companions were planning an uprising and suggested a structure of organization which was rooted in the city's parishes, but was at the same time city-wide:

> The first to rise up will be those of [the neighbourhood of] Camaldoli and of San Frediano. They will ring the bells of Santa Maria del Carmine and San Frediano, then those of San Piero Gattolino and San Niccolò, and then those of Santa Lucia Ognissanti, followed by those of Santo Stefano al Ponte, San Piero Maggiore, and San Lorenzo. And there will be four gatherings: one will be in Santo Spirito . . ., the other in Santo Stefano al Ponte . . ., the other in San Piero Maggiore . . ., and the others will be in San Lorenzo . . .

When these groups eventually stormed onto the Piazza della Signoria, attacked the palace of the wool guild, and burnt the houses of Parte members on 20 July, contemporaries confirmed Simoncino's description and remarked on how the ringing of the bells particularly of San Frediano, San Piero Gattolino, San Giorgio, and the Carmelite church spurred the workers into action.[82]

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[78] *Diario*, 366–7, 370; *Tumulto*, 18 (Acciaioli), 75 (Squittinatore).

[79] Trexler, 'Neighbours and Comrades', 57.

[80] Trexler, 'Neighbours and Comrades'; Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi*, 125–43. While neighbourhoods were an important basis of organization, workers' protest in the fourteenth century also operated on a city-wide level: Cohn, *Laboring Classes*, 66–90, 115–54.

[81] Zorzi, 'Contrôle social', 1170–4 and passim; Cohn, *Laboring Classes*, 27–8, 198–9.

[82] 'E li primi che si leveranno, saranno quelli di Camaldoli e di San Friano; e soneranno le campane del Carmino e di San Friano a martello; e poi quelle di San Piero Gattolino e

However, they were not acting on their own by this time, and other sub-groups were directly involved in the action. On the evening of 20 July, an important meeting took place at the church of San Lorenzo, in the immediate vicinity of the Medici family's houses and the Cella di Ciardo. Among the participants were the *Otto di Guerra*, syndics of the guilds, and thirty-two newly-appointed syndics of the *popolo minuto*, of whom, as Trexler has shown, nearly half came from the *quartiere* of San Giovanni. On this occasion, three petitions were drawn up, one of which was explicitly identified with the syndics of the guilds, while the other two spoke for the *popolo minuto*.[83]

Although little is known about how these petitions were compiled, the demands suggest a certain degree of co-ordination between these different sub-groups. All three petitions made precise demands regarding the *ammonizioni* issue. The syndics of the guilds asked that all those who had been proscribed since *ammonizioni* started in 1358, or who had lost office because of the Parte Guelfa, could apply for rehabilitation before the *balìa* created in June, and that all written records and scrutinies of the Parte Guelfa should be burnt, while magnates were to be banned from the Parte Guelfa. The two petitions of the *popolo minuto* fundamentally shared this aim and explicitly asked for the rehabilitation of six recent victims of *ammonizioni*, who had already applied to be cleared in June, but had had their applications rejected.[84] The petitions also converged in another demand which was undoubtedly aimed at the *popolo minuto*. At the very end (perhaps added at the end of the negotiations), the petition of the syndics of the guilds asked for a headquarters and budget for the guild and consuls of the *popolo minuto*. A similar demand was also

quelle di San Nicolò, e poi quelle d'Ognissanti, di poi quelle da Santo Stefano a Ponte e da San Piero Maggiore e da Santo Lorenzo. E farannosi quattro ragunate: l'una si farà in Santo Spirito, e saranno mille uomini o più; l'altra in Santo Stefano a Ponte, che saranno quattrocento o più; l'altra in San Piero Maggiore, e saranno ottocento e più; gli altri saranno in San Lorenzo, e questi saranno tutti e belletrani, che sono sanza numero', *Tumulto*, 22 (Acciaioli). See also *Tumulto*, 141 (Lettera d'anonimo); Stefani, 321–5. A prosopographical analysis of all Ciompi is impossible, but the Ciompi's documented leaders were concentrated in parishes that were located in the city's suburbs or across the Arno river: Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi*, 91–4. Note that Santa Maria del Carmine was not itself a parish church, but also had close links to its neighbourhood: Brucker, 'Urban Parishes', 25 n. 4; Eckstein, *District of the Green Dragon*, 61–138.

[83] *Tumulto*, 26 (Acciaioli), 74–5 (Squittinatore), 142 (Lettera d'anonimo). Note that a third of the syndics of the *popolo minuto* were themselves guildsmen: Trexler, 'Neighbours and Comrades', 59–63. The guild and the first *popolo minuto* petitions are published in Falletti-Fossati, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi*, 356–75. The second *popolo minuto* petition is published in Screpanti, 'La politica dei Ciompi', 42–56.

[84] Falletti-Fossati, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi*, 357–9, 361–2, 364, 373–4; Screpanti, 'La politica dei Ciompi', 47–50. The six victims of *ammonizione* were Francesco Martini, Giovanni Mozzi, Giraldo Giraldi, Maso di Neri, Mazza d'Andrea, Piero Petriboni, and Francesco and Alessandro Gucci. The syndics of the guilds also asked for the rehabilitation of Donato de' Ricci whose application had been similarly rejected.

made in the petition of the *popolo minuto*, which additionally asked for a share of political offices in the commune.[85] Other demands were, however, only made in specific petitions: the *minuti* formulated precise plans for reforms of the judicial and fiscal systems of Florence, and all three petitions contained requests concerning financial benefits, privileges, bans on office-holding, and exile sentences for specific individuals. The *minuti* also took this opportunity to raise concerns about rents on the Mercato Vecchio, while the syndics of the guilds made demands regarding electoral procedures in the commune.[86]

Like the Ciompi coalition of Florence, temporary alliances were a frequent feature of late medieval cities. Not all, however, succeeded in creating the type of coalition which cut across, as well as incorporated, existing political and social divisions. A case in point is the splinter group which separated from the original Ciompi coalition in the final week of August, stormed the city's prisons, drew up another petition, and allegedly asked the Signoria of Florence to submit to them.[87] This coalition was not only much smaller in scale than its counterpart of July, it was also much more class-based and could not count on cross-cutting urban support: it was almost exclusively composed of Ciompi—most of whom came from neighbourhoods across the Arno—and, although some patricians were directly involved, this coalition was a construct which was quite different from that of only a month earlier.[88] The demands they made also did not reflect the grievances of various sections of the urban population, but mainly arose from these workers' discontent with the July coalition and included a ban on office-holding for the syndics of the *popolo minuto* and guild leaders.[89] Given the much narrower basis of the August coalition, it is also no surprise that it was soon ousted. On 31 August 1378, after the parish churches of San Paolo, San Frediano, San Giorgio, San Niccolò, and Sant'Ambrogio had rung to gather the Ciompi, they were finally defeated in a battle on the Piazza della Signoria. In an assembly of guilds and neighbourhood fighting companies (*gonfaloni*), called by the urban

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[85] Falletti-Fossati, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi*, 364, 366, 371–3.

[86] Falletti-Fossati, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi*, 358–60, 363–70, 373–5. Especially the second petition of the *popolo minuto* contained requests concerning specific individuals: Screpanti, 'La politica dei Ciompi', 42–56.

[87] For the sources on these events: *Tumulto*, 37–40 (Acciaioli), 58 (Nofri), 78–83 (Squittinatore), 116–20 (Compagnano), 131 (Strozziana), 151–2 (Bonifazii); Stefani, 327–37; *Diario*, 375–80; Rodolico, *La democrazia fiorentina*, 441–5.

[88] Trexler, 'Neighbours and Comrades', 102–5. Members of prominent families which were directly or indirectly implicated were Luigi Cavalcanti, Luca da Panzano, Iacopo Sacchetti, and Anibaldo Strozzi.

[89] The petitions have not survived, but their contents can be reconstructed from the chroniclers: Stefani, 328–9; *Tumulto*, 80 (Squittinatore), 117–18 (Compagnano).

government, the Ciompi found themselves isolated and were attacked and dispersed by other workers from two of the three newly created guilds of the *popolo minuto*, by the guilds of butchers and tavern-keepers, and by the *gonfalone* of the Lion d'Oro. Outside the coalition their power had waned, and one day later the third recently established guild of the *popolo minuto*—predominantly composed of Ciompi—was abolished. The Ciompi had clearly failed in attracting the support of other units of political organization. Without access to vital infrastructure, they were not able to form a coalition which could conceivably have threatened the regime which they had helped to bring about.[90]

The polycentric political order, therefore, directly shaped patterns of association in late medieval cities, as action groups of varying longevity and strength formed around the multiple organizational bases of cities. The Ciompi revolt exemplifies all these various groups: corporate action groups of varying levels of cohesion organized around guilds and neighbourhoods; the Parte Guelfa and the more short-lived faction around Salvestro de' Medici; and the Ciompi coalition itself as well as its less successful counterpart of August 1378. In various ways, all of these action groups made use of the resources associated with the complex political structure of Florence. This logic was, in fact, so powerful that even the Ciompi splinter group of August 1378 decided to form a new institution which itself mirrored the organization of urban government. Setting up camp in the Dominican church of Santa Maria Novella, the Ciompi chose eight leaders—known as the *Otto di Santa Maria Novella* —and an advisory college of sixteen members who were aided by four notaries and three chamberlains. In the following days they demanded the calling of a sovereign assembly of Florentine citizens (*parlamento*) and interfered in the process of electing a new Signoria. Ambassadors of the new institution allegedly went as far as asking the city's priors to swear an oath to uphold their demands. According to one chronicler, the Ciompi even conferred supreme legal authority (*merum et mixtum imperium*) on the *Otto*, a form of power otherwise only held by the urban government itself.[91] In a political process so heavily determined by political units with jurisdictional powers, it was scarcely surprising that the Ciompi, in their final political act, turned to creating such an institution themselves.

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[90] Stefani, 332–4; *Diario*, 377–8; *Tumulto*, 81–2 (Squittinatore), 119–20 (Compagnano), 131 (Strozziana), 152 (Bonifazii).
[91] Stefani, 330–1. See also *Tumulto*, 79 (Squittinatore), 151 (Bonifazii).

PART II

URBAN SYSTEMS OF CONFLICT

4

Systems of Conflict

An Overview

Political conflict was a pervasive feature of urban public life, but the ways in which conflict manifested itself in different cities varied considerably. The contrast between Bologna, with its many revolts, and Verona under Venetian rule, with hardly any comparably major conflicts, is telling in this regard. The discovery that politics could work in different ways in these cities was one that contemporaries had to make, sometimes in quite painful circumstances. In the early years of the fifteenth century, several opponents of Venetian rule in Verona and followers of the della Scala family had taken refuge in Bologna. Here they not only benefited from a generally greater scope for action by insurgent groups, but also observed the more confrontational political practices typical for Bologna. In May 1412, several of the insurgents involved in an aborted Veronese rebellion against Venice admitted in prison that they had been inspired in their actions by a guild revolt which had taken place in Bologna exactly a year earlier. However, the political practices that worked in Bologna did not necessarily work in Verona. This was also the experience in 1424 of a della Scala agent, who was travelling from Bologna to Verona with seventy-two della Scala banners, but whose interception was ordered by the Venetian government. The carrying of banners was often associated with military practices, but actions that could have stimulated an escalation of conflict in Bologna were unlikely to produce the same effect in Verona.[1]

Political conflicts are often studied in isolation from each other or from broader patterns of conflict in their respective settings. Only relatively

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[1] For 1412, see Sanudo, col. 866; Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, It. VII 2048 (8331.1: 'Cronica di Antonio Morosini'), 688–91. For 1424, ASVen, Dieci, Deliberazioni miste, 10, fo. 69v. For other links between Veronese rebels and Bologna, see ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Raspe, 3646/6, II, fo. 26r; ASVen, Dieci, Deliberazioni miste, 9, fo. 169r; Sanudo, col. 986; Law, *Commune of Verona*, 308.

recently have scholars turned to studying contention from a perspective which emphasizes the embeddedness of conflict in the unfolding dynamics of political processes.[2] The modes of conflict outlined in Chapter 2 were, in fact, concentrated in cities in ways that differed from city to city. All cities experienced diverse forms of protest, but constitutional bargaining and urban warfare tended to be concentrated in specific cities in ways that cut across regional divides between Italy and the Southern Low Countries. Bologna and Liège, while experiencing all modes of conflict, stood out for the central role played by urban warfare. By contrast, at the other end of the spectrum, Verona and Lille experienced hardly any urban warfare at all, and conflict was chiefly expressed through judicial channels before urban and state magistracies or through low-level forms of political protest. In the middle of the spectrum, Florence and Tournai did occasionally experience urban warfare, but relatively high levels of negotiation were maintained through constitutional bargaining between rival political groups and a strong tradition of protest.

The purpose of Chapters 5, 6, and 7 is to understand why conflicts took such radically different forms in different cities. It is perhaps a truism, but nonetheless worth restating that people have all sorts of reasons for discontent all the time, but the conditions under which this could erupt into revolt or lead to other modes of conflict are not universally shared. In this respect, the polycentric order of cities played a crucial role by facilitating, stimulating, and impeding particular courses of action. After all, city dwellers relied on existing forms of organization and political units to engage in particular types of behaviour or to form specific kinds of action groups. However, political units differed in terms of their number, the resources at their disposal, and the degree to which they were integrated in a larger political framework. This crucially affected the scope of action available to city dwellers in different cities and gave rise to patterns of conflict which varied from city to city. This argument will be laid out more clearly for each of the cities studied in this book, but here it is possible to summarize it by looking at different possible clusters of political units. Any distinction between different clusters can, however, only be heuristic, as the same political units could feature in more than one of them.

First, there were those neighbourhoods, guilds, parties, and comparable collective associations which organized around topographical, professional, and other bases. These are sometimes discussed under the heading

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[2] The pioneer was Charles Tilly: see especially Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, 52–97; McAdam *et al., Dynamics of Contention*, 24–32. For a review of the social science literature on this subject, Goldstone, 'Toward a Fourth Generation of Revolutionary Theory', 152–67.

of 'civil society', because it has often been assumed that such institutions fostered ties of trust and co-operation that contributed to cohesion and order in the city.[3] The evidence, however, suggests that no such straightforward case can be made. As has already been seen, units of this kind often constituted the bases for political protest or for the formation of broader coalitions. In Liège and Bologna, ecclesiastical institutions, the university, guilds, and parties tended to support high levels of political conflict: there were a particularly high number of them, they were well-resourced and relatively autonomous, and they lacked integration into a stable political framework. This often made it possible for insurgents to build new coalitions on the basis of such units and to use their infrastructure to engage in urban warfare. In Verona and Lille, comparable units looked different. There were fewer of them, while guilds, parties, and neighbourhoods were deprived of a noteworthy scope of action in the light of poor resources and a lack of autonomy. Accordingly, potential rebels found it much harder to tap these units in the same way, although they could still be used to organize low-level forms of conflict. In Florence and Tournai, these types of units enjoyed considerable strength in both qualitative and quantitative terms, but in different ways guilds or neighbourhood organizations had been incorporated into the existing political framework for a considerable length of time. They, therefore, tended to encourage constitutional bargaining, but in extraordinary situations insurgent coalitions could also be built around them.

Another relevant cluster comprised those units which were involved in government and could be said to form the various centres of the state apparatuses that crystallized in and around the respective urban arenas. These were often city-based municipal or communal institutions, some of which overlapped or even coincided with the types of unit just discussed, but a very important role was usually played by a plethora of extra-urban agencies. Highly intrusive and demanding governments have often been seen as the cause of revolts, but it is again necessary to draw distinctions on the basis of different degrees of fragmentation.[4] Throughout our period

[3] Rosser, 'Essence of Medieval Urban Communities', 101–10; Archer, *Pursuit of Stability*, 58–148. In the social sciences, such a view has been especially associated with Robert Putnam who linked the supposedly better democratic performance of modern-day Northern Italy to the proto-republican institutions of its medieval cities: Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*, 121–62; see also Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 336–49. For critiques, see Gaggio, 'Do Social Historians Need Social Capital?'; Rotberg, *Patterns of Social Capital*; Eckstein and Terpstra, *Sociability and its Discontents*.
[4] See the Introduction, pp. 3–4. For a differentiated argument regarding the relationship between conflict and modern states, Tilly, *Regimes and Repertoires*, 60–89.

Bologna and Liège were part of extraordinarily volatile states, a situation that was reflected in the existence of powerful semi-autonomous institutions in these cities' hinterlands. These conditions further exacerbated urban fragmentation and encouraged the formation of insurgent coalitions which sought to gain control of the cities. A stark counter-case is provided by Lille and Verona, which were governed by the more streamlined states of Burgundy and Venice. In spite of high fiscal and military demands, revolt rarely broke out in these cities, in part because the opportunities for office-holding or manipulable judicial channels offered alternative routes to address discontent. In the middle of this spectrum are again Florence and Tournai, where a pronounced plurality of legal and political institutions formed part of long-lasting state apparatuses: this also did not eradicate conflict, but actually provided opportunities for high levels of bargaining through constitutional mechanisms that could occasionally be transformed into revolt.

A third cluster was constituted by those political players which were involved in external warfare. The risk that wars could spill over into internal urban politics was always high, but distinctions can be made on the basis of the existing patterns of conflict in cities. In Bologna and Liège external warfare was an almost endemic condition, which often added to existing volatilities. In Verona and Lille even episodes of major external warfare could not easily provoke significant escalations of urban conflict. However, in the context of the potentially fractious political frameworks of Tournai and Florence, destabilization through intense warfare could often be the crucial factor in tilting the political framework of the city from stimulating bargaining through constitutional mechanisms to providing the conditions for revolt and urban warfare.

Cities can, therefore, be viewed as systems in which specific patterns of conflict were ingrained in urban political organization. The notion of a system is a useful way of capturing the choices city dwellers faced within the particular frameworks of their urban arenas, but it is necessary to characterize this concept by specifying three ways in which it is not understood here.[5] First, 'system' is not used in a functionalist sense: its nature is not pre-determined by any common goal, such as social order, that all its constituent parts are supposed to follow. In a system of conflict, conflict is not an aberration or a mere means to maintain social peace, but an integral part of the repertoires of interaction of the existing political order. Second,

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[5] For the conceptual issues underlying the analysis of systems, Scott, *Conceptualising the Social World*, 86–115; Giddens, *Constitution of Society*, 25–6, 162–226. My understanding of system is fundamentally different from that in Barel, *La ville médiévale*, 86–142.

the urban system of conflict is also not viewed as isolated or self-contained, but is itself situated at the intersection of several other systems. Therefore, the city is best viewed as a focal point and an arena for the interactions between numerous forces and the patterns of conflict to which these gave rise. Third, systems provide the framework for political action, but they do not determine it in any straightforward way. The many power bases of cities merely provided the *conditions* for and *constraints* on political action, and thereby gave rise to a specific logic of conflict which any city dweller was well-advised to understand. Individuals could and did act against the logic of the system: the Bolognese did not engage in warfare all the time, nor did the Veronese completely refrain from attempting revolt. However, because city dwellers were so entrenched in the politics of their cities, they were more likely than not to respond to the incentives, stimuli, and impediments provided by the political units surrounding them. By acting in this way, they themselves shaped, kept alive, and recreated the system. Systems of conflict were, therefore, the product of the actions of late medieval city dwellers, as they were of political structures.

It lies outside the scope of this book to investigate the origins of these political systems, but developments in the preceding decades and centuries were crucial to their manifestations in the late Middle Ages. Many of the political units analysed here were created in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, often as a response to the massive demographic expansion which cities in both Italy and the Southern Low Countries underwent in this period. Not all cities responded to the resulting challenges in the same way. For example, in Florence the rise of the *popolo* in the thirteenth century led to the creation of guilds and different neighbourhood institutions, which soon gained in strength, and became established parts of the urban government by the end of the century. In Verona, however, the development of such institutions was contained, partly as the result of the rise, precisely at the same time, of powerful families, such as the da Romano or the della Scala, who could use their cross-regional connections, extensive landed wealth, and links to the city's mercantile elite to control the commune and prevent bodies associated with the *popolo* from developing similarly powerful bases of organization. This had important consequences for the political systems of both cities in our period: while Florentines could work through the existing apparatus of their many communal institutions, such channels were not in the same way available to their Veronese counterparts.[6]

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[6] For Florence, Doren, *Le arti fiorentine*, I, 1–67; Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus*, 3–78. For Verona, Simeoni, 'Il comune'; Rossini, 'La città e i suoi problemi'; Rossini, 'La signoria scaligera'.

The notion of a system is, of course, itself an abstraction and not all late medieval European cities will neatly fit one or another type. However, the three systems of conflict here distinguished should also be seen as part of a spectrum, and cities will be more likely to fall on one point of this spectrum than on another. Some form of typological distinction and abstraction is necessary to understand the mechanisms that governed politics in different cities, and it is for this reason that relatively extreme cases on either end of this spectrum have been chosen. It is likely that most cities fall somewhere in the middle and the two similar, but in many other respects distinct, cases of Florence and Tournai exemplify what medium-range systems of conflict look like. In this spirit, Chapters 5 to 7 will explore the volatile systems of Bologna and Liège, the constitutional systems of Florence and Tournai, and the contained systems of Verona and Lille. Each of these systems of conflict was shaped by the general logic of political conflict so far described, but, stemming from their different political configurations, each system also had its own logic within which the cities' inhabitants generally acted when, in their different ways, they faced up to the variously troubled politics of their respective cities.

5

Bologna and Liège

Volatile Systems of Conflict

High levels of volatility characterized the systems of conflict which developed in Bologna and Liège in the late Middle Ages. Shifting processes of negotiation culminated in the almost constant formation and transformation of political coalitions which frequently embarked on urban warfare. Reports of, and condemnations for, *tumulti, rumores, seditiones*, and *rebelliones* were an integral feature of political patterns in Bologna and Liège. The particular complexity of conflicts in these cities revealed itself in a constant contest over their legitimacy. Accusations of disobedience were an ordinary feature of politics in both cities and stretched from charges of heresy to the highest categories of political crimes.

In Liège, the take-over of government, between 1406 and 1408, by an insurgent coalition prompted the duke of Burgundy to warn of a 'beginning of universal rebellion (*commencement de rebellion universelle*)'.[1] Polemically known as the Hédroits ('those who hate the law'), the insurgents were even accused by the University of Paris of having committed crimes 'against God and the Holy Church (*contre Dieu et saincte eglise*)'.[2] The Hédroits, in turn, charged those city dwellers who had fled in the wake of the revolt with being 'conspirators, enemies, and traitors of the *pays* (*conspiratores et inimicos ac patrie proditores*)'.[3] In Bologna, revolts were characterized by contemporaries in similarly stark language, although it is significant that even its several revolts against papal rule did not often prompt accusations of religious disobedience along the lines seen in Liège. Charges frequently revolved around that of *crimen laesae maiestatis*, such as when, in February 1404, Pope Boniface IX accused the rebel leader Nanne Gozzadini of committing this most far-reaching of political crimes

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[1] Monstrelet, I, 352–3.   [2] *Chartularium universitatis parisiensis*, IV, 157–8.
[3] *CRJB*, 166.

by conducting a full-scale war against papal troops from his family's rural stronghold.[4] The language of warfare was, in fact, especially pertinent in the characterization of the city's revolts. Judicial documents called insurgents 'enemies and rebels (*inimici et rebelles*)', much attention was paid to acts of occupation and invasion, and revolts were often called war (*guerra*) by chroniclers and rebels alike.[5]

   The patterns of conflict in Bologna and Liège had long histories which can only briefly, and schematically, be summarized here. Bologna, Enea Silvio Piccolomini, the later pope Pius II, wrote in a telling description in the mid-fifteenth century, 'is only constant in its inconstancy' and 'cannot so much be called the mother of studies as the nourisher of seditions'.[6] Historians of Bologna have tended to focus on the thirteenth or later fifteenth centuries, but the intervening period has received much less attention. This chapter will focus on the period between 1376 and 1416, which saw the repercussions of the spectacular revolt of Bologna's *popolo* in March 1376. This revolt brought together an extraordinarily large urban coalition to end (if only temporarily) papal rule in the city and re-established the commune through the creation of the *Signoria del Popolo e delle Arti*. The coalition, however, soon fragmented and the following decades saw continuous renegotiations of Bologna's political balance both as far as internal arrangements and the city's external status were concerned. Following a renewed revolt in March 1377, Bologna formally returned under papal overlordship and remained there, however loosely at times, until 1402. However, internal convulsions persisted. Unsuccessful plots challenged the regime twice in 1376, once each in 1386 and 1389, and several times in 1399. More importantly, successful rearrangements of ruling coalitions forced regime changes twice in 1393, again in 1398, twice in 1399, and once more in 1401, when Giovanni Bentivoglio became the city's quasi-signore. Between July 1402 and September 1403, the city was ruled by Milan and was, thereafter, regained for the Papal State by the cardinal-legate Baldassarre Cossa. The following twelve years saw direct rule by the legate in combination with the Bolognese commune, although this period too was interrupted by plots and by a fifteen-month guild regime which started and ended after revolts in May 1411 and August 1412. Another revolt in January 1416,

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   [4] Published in Gozzadini, *Nanne Gozzadini e Baldassarre Cossa*, 521–7.
   [5] For this terminology of warfare see, for instance, ASB, PS, 22, fos. 77r–87r, 106r–113r; Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 84–9.
   [6] He compared Bologna to Genoa: 'Bononia quae non tam studiorum mater quam seditionum altrix appellari potest, soror et ipsa Genue, ac solius inconstantiae constans', Piccolomini, *De Europa*, 210 (rub. CXCIX).

led by a broad insurgent coalition, restored the autonomous commune and stayed in power for three years.

These patterns of conflict broadly reflected the highly volatile political processes of Bologna in earlier and later periods. Witness to an early and especially marked affirmation of the *popolo*, Bologna from the thirteenth century had seen a turbulent history of internal conflicts involving guilds and neighbourhood societies connected with the *popolo*, as well as Guelfs and Ghibellines associated with the Geremei and Lambertazzi factions. Following these fluctuations, the commune saw the rise of the quasi-signorie of the Pepoli and the Gozzadini families in the first decades of the fourteenth century, direct rule by the papal legate Bertrand du Pouget until 1334, another Pepoli-led signoria until 1350, government by Milan and thereafter the renegade Milanese governor Giovanni da Oleggio until 1360, and then again papal rule until the revolt of 1376.[7] After 1416 too, Bologna was subject to ongoing conflicts. Although the city now more or less permanently returned under papal rule, the following decades again saw the re-establishment of the commune for varying periods as well as a brief spell under Milan. An important turning point came with the concordat between Pope Nicholas V and Bologna in 1447, which established shared communal and papal rule by ultimately strengthening an oligarchical faction under the leadership of the Bentivoglio. This agreement, as Angela De Benedictis has shown, turned out to be the basis of Bologna's status within the Papal State for centuries to come, but it also altered Bologna's internal politics, which were now more firmly controlled by a relatively stable ruling elite. However, internal divisions resurfaced after Pope Julius II withdrew his support for the Bentivoglio, thereby occasioning a further revolt of the *popolo* in November 1506.[8] Nicholas Terpstra has suggested that as Bolognese government became more oligarchical in the early modern period, city dwellers countered such trends by organizing around a particularly elevated number of confraternities and charitable institutions, which became vehicles for the expression of urban and other forms of identity.[9]

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[7] For an overview, see Dondarini, *Bologna medievale*; for particular periods prior to 1376, see Milani, *L'esclusione dal comune*; Blanshei, *Politics and Justice*; Antonioli, *Conservator pacis et iustitie*; Lorenzoni, *Conquistare e governare la città*; Sighinolfi, *La signoria di Giovanni da Oleggio*.

[8] De Benedictis, *Repubblica per contratto*, 107–26 and passim; De Benedictis, *Una guerra d'Italia*, 123–54; for the Bentivoglio faction and political conflicts in the later fifteenth century, see Robertson, *Tyranny under the Mantle of St Peter*, 113–37 and passim.

[9] Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities and Civic Religion*, 1–13; Terpstra, '"Republics by Contract"', 303–9.

In this chapter, Bologna will be compared to Liège. Bologna, with its long communal tradition, and Liège, as the 'capital' of a prince-bishopric, were very different cities, and each of the conflicts in these cities had its own reasons. In Liège, conflict not only involved the city, but clashes between its prince-bishop and the *pays* of Liège as a whole. However, both cities did show comparably high levels of urban warfare, and this makes them interesting case studies for this chapter. The politics of late medieval Liège were characterized by a long tradition of urban and regional warfare, and the decades between the 1370s and 1430s show a particularly wide range of different conflicts. The historiography of Liège has for a long time regarded these conflicts as driven by relatively clear divisions between 'patricians' and 'plebeians' within the city, as well as between the 'absolutist' powers of the prince-bishop and the 'democratic' tendencies of Liège, which reminded historians, particularly those of the first half of the last century, of the history of modern-day Belgium. This, however, does not do justice to the more complex interactions in the city and the prince-bishopric, which frequently cut across such divisions.[10] More recently, Geneviève Xhayet, in her analysis of politics in Liège in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, has contributed to a revision of this picture by pointing to the city's numerous networks of power and the importance of factions, which she interpreted as stable and stabilizing mechanisms.[11]

This chapter suggests that political relations in Liège were subject to even greater volatility than has been claimed. Conflict in Liège largely crystallized around three major axes of confrontation. First, over the course of the late Middle Ages the prince-bishop had progressively affirmed his secular authority over the *pays*, provoking wars over his jurisdictional powers between him and coalitions in his cities, including Liège, in 1315–16, 1325–8, 1345–7, and 1373–6. The bishop and his government were again forced to leave Liège in October 1395 in the wake of a dispute over the episcopal tribunal. Disputes over episcopal jurisdiction once more provoked the prince-bishop to vacate his capital in September 1402. After a further deterioration of relations, the coalition of the Hédroits took control of Liège for the first time in July 1403, but was forced into submission one month later. On many of these occasions, divisions ran right through Liège and contributed to a second axis of conflict stemming from the city's internal political fragmentation. Apart from various rival power networks, the deepest division concerned splits between

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[10]   See, for instance, the following passages in Kurth, *La cité de Liège*, I, 152, II, 129–33, III, 1–2; Lejeune, *Liège et son pays*, 390–1, 415–6; Vercauteren, *Les luttes sociales*, 66–7, 80–1.

[11]   Xhayet, *Réseaux de pouvoir*, 311–64, 451–4, and passim.

guilds and patricians, although by the end of the fourteenth century the guilds had strengthened their grip on the urban political apparatus. From 1384, guild membership was mandatory for city dwellers who wanted to become one of Liège's two *bourgmestres*, and in 1386 guilds were able to purge an entire class of office-holders through a politically motivated judicial investigation. All these conflicts were further exacerbated by the third axis of confrontation created by the Great Schism (1378–1417), during which rival popes, for the most part based at Rome and Avignon, divided Western Christendom. In the prince-bishopric of Liège the prince-bishop himself, the chapter of the cathedral, various other churches, as well as power blocs within Liège all became embroiled in questions raised by this calamitous context. This led to conflicts around the election of a bishop supporting Avignon (1378–9), a scandal over a suspected plot by Avignonese supporters (1383), and conflicts over whether to subtract obedience from Rome (1399–1404).

In 1406–8, all these different lines of confrontation culminated in the major revolt of the Hédroits. Sustained by a coalition comprising office-holders, especially former *bourgmestres* of the city, several collegiate churches, and the guilds, this revolt was directed against episcopal jurisdiction, and was fuelled by the divisions of the Schism. After taking control of the city, the Hédroits appointed Thierry de Perwez as the new bishop and his father Henri as *mambour* (governor) of the *pays* of Liège, and led a two-year large-scale war against the prince-bishop, who had taken refuge in Maastricht. The revolt was eventually put down in a bloody battle at Othée (23 September 1408) by an army of the duke of Burgundy and the count of Hainaut-Holland which numbered some 8,000 soldiers. After the battle, the duke of Burgundy deprived Liège of its municipal administration, which was only restored between 1415 and 1418. High levels of conflict, however, did not go away. Between the later 1410s and early 1430s, factional conflict revived in the city, and after a further forced reorganization of urban government a coalition around the Datin family sought to engineer a violent revolt in 1433. Smouldering conflict with the prince-bishop continued, and was to escalate into another full-blown revolt and war in the 1460s, before being put down by another intervention by the duke of Burgundy who destroyed the entire city in 1468.

The volatility of Bologna and Liège is also reflected in the survival and character of their sources. Almost the entirety of the medieval documentation pertaining to Liège's urban government, its guilds, and that of the prince-bishopric was lost in the convulsions of the fifteenth century: in 1408, the city and its guilds were forced to deliver their charters and privileges to the duke of Burgundy in the wake of Othée, while nearly all the remaining documentation was burnt in the sack of Liège in 1468.

However, a non-negligible number of sources, now largely edited, have survived in other archives or through legal collections known as *pawilhars*.[12] Bologna's communal records also saw their fair share of destruction, but the city's Archivio dello Stato still preserves what is arguably one of the richest archives of a late medieval Italian commune. For our purposes, two archival series have been especially important. First, the records of Bologna's judicial agencies survive for great parts of this period, and have been useful for the reconstruction of conflicts, although it was unsurprisingly the failed plots rather than the successful revolts that mainly found their way into judicial investigations. Second, communal ordinances, surviving especially plentifully from the revolt of March 1376 to December 1400, allow us to trace the actions of various urban governments which came to power in the wake of insurgencies.[13] In addition to municipal or communal records, several other political players have left sources, thereby reflecting the plurality of political institutions in both cities: in Liège, this mainly takes the form of the rich cartularies of its cathedral and collegiate churches as well as some patchy guild records; in Bologna, the university and the private archives of families involved in the city's political struggles add a further dimension to the surviving communal archives.[14]

The narrative sources are very extensive for Bologna and Liège. Although important work has recently been done, particularly for Bologna, many of the chronicles in question require modern editions and considerable further work on their nature and origins.[15] There is no space to discuss these sources in detail here, but some general observations can be made. First of all, a large part of these chronicles is preoccupied with the cities' conflicts. The very fact that there are such extensive narrative records for Bologna and Liège may itself suggest that at least some of these writings were directly inspired by, or even played a role in, the conflicts in question. It is, in fact, striking that cities with low levels of conflict, such as Verona and Lille, knew no comparable narrative tradition. Almost all Bolognese and Liégeois chroniclers consulted for this investigation were contemporaries

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[12] *LR*, I, 1–11. The principal sources are: *LR; LO; Chartes confisquées aux bonnes villes; Coutumes du pays de Liège*. See also Balau, *Les sources de l'histoire de Liège*.

[13] The series consulted in ASB are: PI; PS; Capitano del Popolo, Giudici del Capitano del Popolo; Provvigioni in capreto. For an introduction, including to collections of ordinances other than the Provviggioni in capreto, see Tamba, *I documenti del governo del comune bolognese*.

[14] See the respective sections in this chapter.

[15] For Bologna, see Andreolli, *Repertorio della cronachistica*, 129–57; Pezzarossa, 'Alcune osservazioni'; Quaquarelli, *Per singulare memoria*. A particularly problematic case is the *Corpus chronicorum bononiensium*, which contains four different, but partly interrelated chronicles: see the entry in Andreolli, *Repertorio della cronachistica*, 149–53. For Liège, Marchandisse, 'Histoire et chroniques'.

and took sides in the conflicts they described: this eliminates their potential as 'objective' observers, but makes them all the more interesting as operators in, and representatives of, a volatile system of conflict.

In Liège, many chroniclers of this period were clerics associated with powerful ecclesiastical institutions in Liège or neighbouring cities in the prince-bishopric.[16] This meant that most of them were, naturally, hostile to the Hédroits, although their precise political position was often complex. Jean de Stavelot, perhaps the most detailed commentator and a Benedictine monk at Liège, attacked the Hédroits for their disobedience to the bishop and Church. At the same time, he criticized the prince-bishop John of Bavaria and praised his successor as 'a just bishop and true shepherd (*drois evesque et vraie pasteur*)'.[17] Other commentators also took positions in the city's convulsions. Jean d'Outremeuse, an official at the episcopal court, played a role in the purge of urban office-holders in 1386. Jacques de Hemricourt, secretary of the échevinage between 1356 and 1383, was the author of a custumal manual in which he criticized the social breadth of municipal government, particularly the powers held by minor guilds.[18]

Summarizing the standpoints of Bolognese chroniclers in the shifting political context of their city is similarly complex. A pertinent example is that of Matteo Griffoni, a prominent Bolognese notary. From sometime in the first decade of the fifteenth century to his death in 1426, Matteo wrote a chronicle known as *Memoriale historicum*, which, interspersed with autobiographical information, covered earlier as well as contemporary Bolognese history in which he was a protagonist. It is telling that Griffoni's chronicle pays particular attention to the alliance between shifting coalitions and precise accounts of revolts rather than to the workings of urban government, which, as a long-standing office-holder and notary in the communal archives, he knew at first hand. Although close to the milieu of the Maltraversi party, Matteo co-operated with several diverse coalitions and changed his political colours several times. In 1389, as an *anziano* on the urban government, he intervened on behalf of Maltraversi rebels who had sought to deliver Bologna to Milan. In May 1398, he supported the Maltraversi-sustained revolt of the party leader Carlo Zambeccari, but also brokered a marriage alliance between Zambeccari, the rival

[16] The following links could be established: Stavelot and Stavelot (*lat.*): Saint-Laurent, Benedictine abbey; *1402*: cathedral of Saint-Lambert; Zantfliet and 'Notice concernant un manuscrit de l'abbaye de Saint-Jacques': Saint-Jacques, Benedictine abbey; Mathias de Lewis, *Chronicon leodiense*: collegiate church of Sainte-Croix; *CRJB*: chapter of Sint-Truiden; Rivo: chapter of Tongeren.
[17] Stavelot, 166; see also Stavelot, 105–6, 125–6, 140, 164.
[18] Outremeuse, 220; Jacques de Hemricourt, 'Patron de la temporalité du pays de Liège', xii–xxix, 55–7.

Gozzadini, and his own family. Thereafter, Griffoni can be found support-
ing all successive regimes, even when these had been mutually hostile: in
March 1401, as we shall see later, he made the difficult step of supporting
Giovanni Bentivoglio of the rival Scacchesi party; he then backed Milan,
after it brought down Bentivoglio; thereafter, he became a trusted council-
lor of Cardinal Cossa, who took Bologna from the Milanese; and when
Bologna rebelled against the Church in 1416, Griffoni was appointed one
of the councillors on the new urban government.[19]

Shifting allegiances, such as those of Griffoni, and the essential insta-
bility of political associations, lay at the root of the frequent outbreaks
of urban warfare and challenges to urban regimes of both Bologna and
Liège. In both cities this can be traced back to the multiple bases of politi-
cal organization around the resources and infrastructure of which con-
flicts took place. In Bologna and Liège, a wealth of political units—such
as ecclesiastical agencies, university-related institutions, guilds, and par-
ties—shared two characteristics: first, they were relatively well-resourced
and often enjoyed considerable autonomy; second, they were often only
loosely integrated into a coherent political framework. Rather than func-
tioning as stabilizing forces they stimulated volatility and encouraged,
allowed, or even forced action groups around and within such bodies
to form new coalitions, which were then likely to engage in urban war-
fare. Because of this highly unstable environment, these units were also
more prone to internal divisions and, thereby, further heightened levels
of conflict. The volatile plurality of political units inside the cities was
mirrored by a plurality of political structures outside Bologna and Liège.
Neighbouring cities or alternative bases of power in the cities' hinterland,
high levels of exposure to external warring powers, and the divisions result-
ing from the Schism all weighed heavily on an already weak and highly
unstable political structure. Urban warfare and extreme levels of volatility
were inescapable consequences of these cities' volatile systems of conflict.

CONFLICT AROUND CHURCHES AND
THE UNIVERSITY

In Bologna and Liège political conflict was often stimulated by units that
did not exist or were not politicized to the same degree in other cities. The
university of Bologna and the ecclesiastical institutions of Liège enjoyed

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[19] Griffoni, 83, 87–8, 91–3, 96, 100, 103; *Corpus*, 399, 462, 473, 481, 542, 557. On
Griffoni and the *Memoriale*, see Zabbia, *I notai e la cronachistica cittadina*, 145–78; the
contributions in *Matteo Griffoni nello scenario politico-culturale*.

considerable leverage in the political processes of both cities, and political groupings of varying kinds naturally galvanized around these bases of organization.

Liège possessed a powerful cathedral chapter, seven collegiate churches, and two abbeys in addition to other parish churches, monasteries, and friaries. Of course, neither in this respect nor in the involvement of many of its citizens in the local churches was it unusual among late medieval European cities. Particular to Liège, however, was its status as the capital of a prince-bishopric. This conferred a formal role on many of its ecclesiastical institutions, which played into political processes much more directly than they could do in many other cities. This was true, first and foremost, for the chapter of the cathedral church of Saint-Lambert. It was the first of the Three Estates of the *pays* of Liège, it at least formally elected the bishop, and it fixed the capitulations on which new bishops were sworn in. Constitutionally, the chapter possessed the power to overrule the bishop if he or his officers disrespected sentences of a joint court composed of representatives of the bishop, chapter, nobles, and cities of the *pays*.[20]

It is not surprising, then, that its political role made the chapter an important player in political conflicts and a relevant resource for insurgents. Between 1373 and 1376, the chapter was, at least in the beginning, implicated in a war that had broken out between the cities of the *pays* of Liège and Bishop John of Arckel over the remit of episcopal jurisdiction. Initially providing lukewarm support for the insurgents, the chapter even sent two of its canons, Guillaume Boileau de Mons and Jacques de Remouchamps, to Avignon, where, together with the ambassadors of Liège and the other *bonnes villes* of the prince-bishopric, they presented a list of grievances against the bishop to Pope Gregory XI in October 1375. In the following months, the chapter showed itself less willing to support the insurrection, and opposed requests to disrespect the interdict which the bishop had imposed on the city. It continued, however, to provide diplomatic support to the insurgent coalition by mediating in negotiations with the bishop, in addition to (under considerable pressure) providing financial support of 500 *doubles* for the coalition's war effort against Arckel in May 1376.[21]

The chapter would remain an important player in subsequent political conflicts. In July 1378, the chapter elected as bishop Eustache Persand de

[20] Lejeune, *Liège et son pays*, 211–36; Xhayet, *Réseaux de pouvoir*, 69–76. The chapter's decisions were, of course, influenced by external powers. For the chapter's role in elections in this period: Outremeuse, 212, 214, 225, 227; Stavelot, 77–80, 94, 97–100, 164–6, 168–9; Stavelot (*lat.*), 76–7, 94, 107, 134, 136; *CRJB*, 161–4; Zantfliet, cols. 313–14, 336; Rivo, 40–1; *1402*, 378–9, 410–11; *LR*, III, 91–4.
[21] Outremeuse, 200–8; Zantfliet, cols. 303–7; *LR*, II, 92; Rivo, 26–7; *1402*, 370–1.

Rochefort, a supporter of the duke of Brabant and, as it later turned out, of the Avignonese pope Clement VII. This move generated tensions in the city and outside. The chapter, in fact, only eventually backed down from its decision after the city of Liège, led by the tanner Henri Frérart and the money-changer Jean d'Amay, came out against Eustache and the Roman pope Urban VI refused to confirm his appointment. Over the following years, Eustache continued to cultivate support in the *pays*, and several members of the cathedral chapter—including Boileau and Remouchamps—were implicated in this process.[22] On other occasions, the chapter's refusal to back insurgent coalitions could be equally crucial. When in 1403 and 1406 Hédroits-led coalitions came to power in Liège, they asked the cathedral chapter to ratify their elections of a *mambour* and bishop, and in both cases the chapter refused. In autumn 1406, with the exception of the canon Wilhaume delle Roche (who happened to be the son of one of the insurgents), the canons fled to Sint-Truiden, where they were soon besieged by a Hédroit army and eventually forced to emigrate to Brabant. The Hédroit coalition, of course, knew of the chapter's crucial role in the political process, and soon filled the vacant benefices with political supporters. It is indeed a testimony to the mobilizing force of the chapter as a political structure that, among the lists of minor appointments made in this context, the name of Guillaume Boileau, the old Clementist and collaborator with previous insurgent coalitions, could also be found.[23]

More important as a source of support for the Hédroit coalition was the clergy of other ecclesiastical institutions (known as the *clergé secon-daire*). Liège's seven collegiate churches as well as many other ecclesiastical bodies from around the prince-bishopric, most unusually, formed an association amongst themselves, which was headed by two deans and met regularly in the church of Saint-Pierre. As its records only survive in systematic form from 1587, their exact role in the political process for the fifteenth century cannot be determined, but, given the double role of the bishop as both temporal and spiritual lord of the city, questions over his legitimacy naturally tended to embroil other ecclesiastical institutions in

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[22] Outremeuse, 212–14; Stavelot (*lat.*), 76–80; Zantfliet, cols. 313–14; Rivo, 40; *1402*, 376–7; *LR*, I, 461–9: Outremeuse reports that the city immediately opposed Eustache (possibly because of his support for Brabant), but according to Stavelot this only happened after Rome's rejection. Boileau and Remouchamps ended up as canons at Laon, in prebends provided by Clement: Millet, *Les chanoines*, 348–9. For other Clementists in the cathedral chapter, including the dean in 1382, Nelis, 'La collation des bénéfices', 50–4. See also Schoolmesters, 'L'élection d'Eustache Persand'.

[23] *CRJB*, 152, 165, 167–8; Stavelot, 18, 99–100, 105; Stavelot (*lat.*), 107–8. The chapter appointed by the Hédroit regime can be reconstructed from the proceedings launched against it by the exiled chapter: 'Notice concernant un manuscrit de l'abbaye de Saint-Jacques', 45–7.

Table 5.1 Liège: Canons convicted by Prince-Bishop John of Bavaria for involvement with the Hédroits (20 December 1408)[a]

Church	City	Number of canons convicted
Saint-Pierre	Liège	3
Saint-Martin	Liège	3
Saint-Paul	Liège	4
Sainte-Croix	Liège	4
Saint-Jean l'Évangeliste	Liège	10
Saint-Barthélemy	Liège	3
Saint-Denis	Liège	1
Notre-Dame	Huy	4
Onze-Liewe-Vrouw	Tongeren	4
Saint-Feuillien	Fosses	6
Sainte-Ode	Amay	2
Saint-Pierre	Namur	1
Notre-Dame	Ciney	1
Onze-Liewe-Vrouw	Maaseik	1
not specified	Visé	2
Sint-Amor	Bilzen	1
Sainte-Begge	Andenne	1
not specified	Couvin	1
Onze-Liewe-Vrouw	Maastricht	1

[a] Only the *clergé secondaire* have been considered for this table. Those with multiple canonries are listed only once under the church for which they are first mentioned.

Source: 'Quelques nouveaux documents', 185–90.

urban political conflict.[24] After the revolt of the Hédroits, Bishop John of Bavaria condemned eighty-two individuals who belonged to the *clergé secondaire* of Liège and other cities for involvement with the rebels. As is illustrated in Table 5.1, fifty-four of these held canonries, many of which were based at Liège's collegiate churches. In Saint-Jean l'Évangéliste, as many as ten out of some thirty benefice-holders were sentenced as Hédroit supporters. After the defeat of the revolt, one of its canons, Eustache de Burdinnes, even tried to stage another uprising in Herk-de-Stad.[25] Some churches, such as Sainte-Croix, appear to have sheltered supporters of the Avignonese pope Clement VII already in the 1380s, before becoming the operating base for several Hédroit insurgents in the early fifteenth century.

[24] Dury, 'Fraternités et clergé secondaire'; Xhayet, *Réseaux de pouvoir*, 205–12.
[25] *Inventaire analytique des chartes de la collégiale de Saint-Jean l'Évangéliste*, I, lxi, lxxvi, lxii, lvii, liii, cvii, cxi; *CRJB*, 205.

For instance, a canon of Sainte-Croix, Lambert Grégoire, participated in the first Hédroit revolt of 1403 and was subsequently instrumental in persuading the Perwez family into accepting the leadership of the successful 1406 revolt.[26] The (at times limited) mobilization of supporters was not the only contribution provided by such churches. In the collegiate church of Saint-Martin, only five of the previously fifteen resident canons remained in the city, which gave the Hédroits the opportunity to appoint as many as twenty new canons from the ranks of their supporters. The Hédroits also used Saint-Martin as a crucial financial resource and appear to have received or borrowed as much as 640 crowns from this church between September and November 1407 to finance their siege of Maastricht where the prince-bishop was holding out.[27]

Ecclesiastical institutions in Liège were thus crucial building blocks of coalitions which engaged in urban warfare, whether this concerned the mobilization of supporters or the provision of diplomatic, legal, and financial help to insurgent coalitions. Although Bologna was, most of the time at least, a subject city of the Papal State, its ecclesiastical institutions played no such direct political role. Except when Bologna was ruled by legates, papal power was not represented at all or only through vicars whose influence was very limited. The bishop, monastic institutions, and the city's confraternities certainly affected urban politics through indirect channels, but played no direct role as organizing bases of revolt in the way they did in Liège.[28] One of the few occasions in this period for which there is evidence for the involvement of members of the cathedral chapter in urban political conflict comes from 1412–16, when the canons Battista Gozzadini and Pietro Ramponi stood accused of rebellious activities during a period of acute crisis in the Papal State at large.[29]

In its university, on the other hand, Bologna possessed its own institution around which political conflict crystallized. The principal agents were not the students themselves who, as strangers to the city, mostly appear to

[26] *Inventaire analytique des chartes de la collégiale de Sainte-Croix*, I, ci, cxxii; 'Notice concernant un manuscrit de l'abbaye de Saint-Jacques', 13–14; *LR*, III, 79; *CRJB*, 156–7, 162; Stavelot, 99. For the 1380s, see Outremeuse, 216–17; Stavelot (*lat.*), 85–6.

[27] 'La collégiale de Saint-Martin', 58–63. A canon of Saint-Martin had already been implicated in the first Hédroit revolt of 1403: *CRJB*, 156–7; *LR*, III, 79; 'Notice concernant un manuscrit de l'abbaye de Saint-Jacques', 13–14.

[28] For these institutions, see Vasina, 'Bologna nello Stato della Chiesa'; Vasina, 'Chiesa e comunità dei fedeli'; Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities and Civic Religion*.

[29] They were members of prominent families which supported a wider campaign against papal rule: *Corpus*, 544–57; Griffoni, 101–3; Ramponi, *Memoriale e cronica*, 12–27; ASB, PI, 301, no. 1, fos. 32r–34r, 35r–37v, 213r–217r; ASB, PS, 34, 'Banna (1412)', fos. 33r–35v; ASB, PS, 34, 'Condempnationes (1412–13)', fos. 49r, 69r–70r; ASB, PS, 35, 'Condemnationes (1413–15)', fos. 34r–38v, 145r–146v; ASB, Capitano del Popolo, 855, fos. 74r–75v, 102r–102v; Gozzadini, *Nanne Gozzadini e Baldassarre Cossa*, 564–8.

have stayed out of urban conflicts, unless these were, as in the thirteenth century, closely related to the university's fortunes.[30] Instead, important participants of urban politics were the members of the *Collegio dei Dottori*, a body of the nineteen senior civil law lecturers who were in charge of doctoral examinations. These men were not only in receipt of salaries from the commune, but were also for the most part members of Bologna's most powerful families. The *Collegio's* decisions on fee rises or its frequent jurisdictional disputes with the archdeacon, the papal representative, had major repercussions on urban politics. Because of the university's importance, Pope Boniface IX forbade the scholars of the *studium* to suspend lessons in 1392, because this would 'create agitation in the whole community'.[31] From the start of the *Signoria del Popolo e delle Arti*, the members of the *Collegio* were also implicated in Bologna's tumultuous politics because, as authorities on civil law, the *dottori* were the crucial point of reference for legal enquiries and an important resource for the staffing of the frequent *balìe* (special commissions), which were created by rival insurgent coalitions to reform the commune. Not unlike the chapter of Liège, the *Collegio* and its lawyers were, therefore, also a crucial legitimating institution for insurgents, and it has already been seen how the Bolognese lawyers went about justifying the 1376 revolt against the papacy.[32]

The *Collegio* could and did act as a corporate body. Under the period of direct rule by the cardinal-legate Baldassarre Cossa (later Pope John XXIII) and by his successor, several Bolognese institutions, including the university, suffered heavily. At Cossa's deposition at the Council of Constance in 1415 it was also alleged, probably not without some input from Bolognese representatives, that he had appropriated stipends of the university's *dottori* and misappropriated funds of one of the city's prestigious colleges, the Collegio Gregoriano. As the council's proceedings charged, 'during the period of his government [in Bologna], many died, fled, were exiled, banished, disinherited, impoverished, or annihilated because of tyranny and his violent rule'. Accusations of tyranny were,

[30] A rare exception is the hanging of the student Guiduccio da Monzuno in June 1387, reported in Griffoni, 81. For students in Bologna, see Greci, 'L'associazionismo degli studenti'; De Benedictis, 'La fine dell'autonomia studentesca'.

[31] 'Tota communitas in agitatione versatur', Zambeccari, *Epistolario*, 136–7. Conflicts with the archdeacon are reported in *Il 'Liber secretus iuris caesarei'*, I, 87–8, 148, 151, 155, 197–9. For lecturers and the archdeacon, see Pini, 'I maestri dello studio'; Paolini, 'La figura dell'arcidiacono'.

[32] See Chapter 1, p. 32. For instance, of the nine members of the committee to review communal legislation, formed a month after the revolt in March 1376, five (Andrea Buoi, Sante Danisi, Francesco Ramponi, Giacomo Salamoni, and Niccolò da Zappolino) were members of the *Collegio*. See *Gli statuti del comune di Bologna*, 297 (proemium); *Il 'Liber secretus iuris caesarei'*, I, cxvi–cxxxi; *I rotuli dei lettori legisti e artisti dello studio bolognese*, I, 5.

as we have seen, one of the prime rationales for political conflict, and it is not surprising that members of the *Collegio dei Dottori* were involved in revolts against Cossa.[33] This explains why a guild-led revolt of May 1411, which overthrew papal rule, attracted the unlikely support of the *Collegio.* Its prior, Giacomo Marescalchi, noted approvingly in an entry in the college's *Liber secretus* that 'the *studium* will gain and our sacred college flourish' thanks to the revolt.[34] After the restoration of papal rule in Bologna in mid-1412, the *Collegio* continued to be well-placed as a rallying basis for insurgent coalitions. In December 1413, the podestà uncovered an anti-papal plot, which was led by some of the city's most prominent civil lawyers. It had started when the son of one of the 1411 rebels, the lawyer Gregorio di Massimo di ser Guoro, contacted Giovanni Guasconi, a member of the *Collegio*, to organize a plot with the Malatesta lords of Rimini. Presumably as a result of Guasconi's connections, they were soon able to extend the circle to include their fellow *dottori* Angelo Poeti, a salaried lecturer in civil law, and Graziolo da Tossignano, the son of another member of the *Collegio.* Ironically for such an illustrious social circle, Poeti was to write a banner with the inscription 'Long live the *popolo* and the guilds', although it never came to be used because the academics were discovered.[35]

Members of the *Collegio* had been closely involved in communal politics since the thirteenth century, and it is, therefore, not surprising that on many occasions they were also involved in revolts. Often the *Collegio*, like the churches of Liège, did not act as a uniform body, but was the organizing base for influential and well-resourced individuals who could be mobilized to support insurgent coalitions. Table 5.2 charts the political allegiances of those families represented on the *Collegio* of whom at least one member was involved in one of six periods of intense political conflict. This table, however, needs to be interpreted with some caution because biographical information is not available for all the families at all points and because some families were divided.

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[33] 'Ita quod, tempore sui regiminis, mala tyranica et violenta sua gubernatione causantibus, multi fuerunt mortui, multi profugi, multi exules, banniti, exhaeredati, depauperiti et deperditi', *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, XXVII, col. 669; *Il 'Liber secretus iuris caesarei'*, I, 180, 187. See also Pio, 'Lo studium e il papato'.

[34] 'augmentabitur Studium et sic nostrum sacrum florebit collegium', *Il 'Liber secretus iuris caesarei'*, I, 195.

[35] 'Viva el popolo et li arti', ASB, PS, 35, fos. 22r–24v; ASB, PI, 301, no. 4, fos. 26r–28r, 82r–85v; *Corpus*, 547–8; Griffoni, 102; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 257–8; *Il 'Liber secretus iuris caesarei'*, I, cxvi–cxxxi; *I rotuli dei lettori legisti e artisti dello studio bolognese*, I, 31, 33–4, 37, 39, 41–2. For the involvement of Gregorio's father Massimo, see *Corpus*, 546. Also involved were Giovanni Liazzari and Lodovico Mariscotti.

Table 5.2 Bologna: The participation of *Collegio dei Dottori* families in selected episodes of conflict (1376–1416)[a]

	1376	1389	1398	1401	1403	1411–16
Aldovrandi	—	—	X	—	—	—
Bentivoglio	X	—	X	D	D	X
Buoi	X	—	—	—	X	X
Caldarini	—	—	—	—	X	X
Canetolo	—	—	—	X	X	X
Castel San Pietro, da	—	—	—	X	—	X
Fantuzzi	X	D	—	—	X	X
Garsendini	X	X	—	—	—	—
Guasconi	—	—	—	—	—	X
Isolani	X	X	X	—	—	—
Lapi	—	—	—	—	X	—
Piantavigni	—	—	—	X	—	X
Ramponi	X	—	—	—	—	X
Saliceto, da	D	D	X	—	—	X
Scappi	X	—	X	X	—	X
Testi	—	—	—	—	—	X
Tossignano, da	—	X	—	—	—	X
Zambeccari	X	—	X	X	X	D
Zappolino, da	X	—	X	—	—	—

[a] X: support for or connivance with rebel coalitions; D: reported divisions within a family. The families listed are those families which were represented on the *Collegio dei Dottori* and of which at least one member participated in one of the conflicts.

March 1376: revolt against the Papal State; November 1389: attempted Maltraversi plot in co-operation with Milan; May 1398: Maltraversi revolt; March 1401: revolt of Giovanni Bentivoglio; September 1403: revolt against Milan; 1411–16: series of plots and revolts for and against the Papal State.

Sources: For the *Collegio* families, *Il 'Liber secretus iuris caesarei'*, I, cxvi–cxxxi. They were identified in the following primary or secondary sources: *Corpus*; Griffoni; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*; Borselli, *Cronica*; ASB, Provvigioni in capreto, 1, 3, 6; ASB, Capitano del Popolo, 855; ASB, PI, 301; ASB, PS, 27, 34, 35; *Cronologia delle famiglie nobili di Bologna*; *I Riformatori dello Stato di Libertà*; Bosdari, 'Giovanni I Bentivoglio'; Gozzadini, *Nanne Gozzadini e Baldassarre Cossa*; Palmieri, 'La congiura'; Tamba, *Il regime del popolo e delle arti*; Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*; Vancini, 'Una rivoluzione di "Ciompi"'.

Different episodes of political conflict enjoyed varying levels of *Collegio* involvement: the strongest and most concentrated support was for the revolt against the papacy in 1376, as well as the series of plots and revolts against papal rule in 1411–16; other coalitions, especially those behind an attempted plot to deliver Bologna to Milan in 1389 and the revolt of Giovanni Bentivoglio in 1401, were constituted by smaller groups of families associated with the *Collegio*. *Collegio* members were also at odds with

each other, sometimes even within the same family. A case in point is that of the divisions which affected the da Saliceto, a prominent family which was closely connected to the *Collegio*. Bartolomeo da Saliceto, a famous civil lawyer and member of the *Collegio*, was a major political player until his participation in the plot to deliver Bologna to Milan forced him to flee after 1389. By contrast, his uncle Riccardo and cousin Roberto—who was also a civil lawyer and member of the *Collegio*—had lived in exile for more than a decade from 1377, while Bartolomeo worked as an ambassador for the commune. Ironically, Roberto returned in 1388 and became an important figure in the *Collegio* in the 1390s, precisely when his cousin Bartolomeo was himself forced into exile. Bartolomeo eventually returned after another revolt in 1398, but was forced to leave in 1403, again because of his political allegiances.[36]

The politicization of the personnel of the university, as much as the politicization of ecclesiastical institutions in Liège, produced a situation which, on the one hand, made units such as the *Collegio dei Dottori* crucial political players and turned them into infrastructural bases for wider insurgent coalitions. On the other hand, these same units showed a tendency to fragmentation, which, because of their importance and prestige, arguably exacerbated the volatility of politics in both Bologna and Liège. In both cities, therefore, the operations of such units led to an increase rather than a decrease of urban warfare and revolts, something that was not always compatible with their ethos. After all, when not involved in rebellion, Bartolomeo da Saliceto was a prominent commentator on Roman Law, and defended heavy punishment for any actions against the *res publica*.[37]

VOLATILE GUILDS AND PARTIES

The guilds of Bologna and Liège also directly played into political conflicts. First, they had a long history of more or less direct participation in urban government, and possessed the necessary resources and infrastructure for involvement in high-level forms of political conflict. Second, they were internally fragile bodies because they were not firmly bound into an existing political framework. This meant that their members or splinter groups

[36] *I rotuli dei lettori legisti e artisti dello studio bolognese*, I, 4, 6, 8–11, 15, 24, 27–8, 30–1, 33, 35, 37, 39, IV, 4–6; *Il 'Liber secretus iuris caesarei'*, I, cxvi–cxxxi; *Corpus*, 300, 310, 318, 337, 349, 386–7, 396–7, 462–3, 471, 499, 543–4, 557; Griffoni, 71–2, 75, 83, 88, 90, 96, 100–1, 103; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 61; Palmieri, 'La congiura', 190, 210–16; 'Frammento della cronaca bolognese di Prete Giovanni', 98; Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 17, 19, 45–6, 53, 71. For the da Saliceto, see also Bellomo, 'Una famiglia di giuristi'.
[37] Bartolomeo da Saliceto, *In VII, VIII, et IX Codicis libros commentaria*, fos. 246v–247r.

were willing, encouraged, or even forced to join larger coalitions which were then likely to engage in revolt. The cities' factions mirrored this volatility: they only tended to survive for a period of time, and thereby added a further dimension to the complicated processes of coalition formation.

The guilds of Liège had a high stake in the city's political process. By the late fourteenth century, the council of the urban government was almost exclusively manned by guild representatives (with two members for each of the thirty-two guilds). Furthermore, from 1384 both *bourgmestres*, the city's senior urban officials, had to be drawn from among the guild ranks, and guilds also formed the main organizational basis of the municipal militia. In the 1380s and 1390s, the guilds of Liège further extended their powers. In 1386 they played a crucial role in the judicial investigation that led to the banishment of all the members of the échevinage, which, by this point, had lost most of its executive powers and was the city's supreme tribunal. In the late 1390s pressure from certain guilds drove Bishop John of Bavaria into a war with the duke of Guelders.[38] However, what on the surface may have looked like a consolidated guild regime was in effect subject to radical changes. Guild powers had already drawn criticism in the 1380s from the secretary of the échevinage, Jacques de Hemricourt, who had complained about the equal power given to minor and major guilds in Liège, and about their prominent role in urban politics.[39] Not only were guild powers in the election of the *bourgmestres* curtailed in 1398 and 1402, but, after the Battle of Othée in 1408, all the guilds and virtually the entire municipal administration were abolished. This was almost certainly a retaliation for the guilds' role during the Hédroit revolt, because they were the principal military companies used by the Hédroits in their war against the prince-bishop. Guilds were re-established in the following decade, but a variety of different guild systems were experimented with in a number of reforms promoted by the bishop and city: in 1416, twelve military companies were created that grouped together a variety of guilds; in 1417, a system of seventeen and, in 1418, of twenty-four guilds was re-established; and, finally, the original thirty-two guilds, together with their power to elect the *bourgmestres*, were again restored. By 1424, the system again ran into trouble and into yet another reform: the college for the

[38] Xhayet, 'Le rôle politique des métiers liégeois'; Poncelet, 'Les bons métiers de la cité de Liège'. For the military function of guilds, see Zantfliet, col. 342; *CRJB*, 171–8, 181; Stavelot, 108–12, 299–303, 313; Stavelot (*lat.*), 111–12; *LO*, 490–501. For 1386, Stavelot (*lat.*), 88–9; Outremeuse, 219–20; *1402*, 399–404; Zantfliet, cols. 329–33; Rivo, 58–60; *LO*, 429–50; Kurth, *La cité de Liège*, II, 331, 334; de Borman, *Les échevins de la souveraine justice de Liège*, 472–4. For the 1397–9 war, *CRJB*, 147–8; Stavelot (*lat.*), 100–1; Outremeuse, 232–3; *1402*, 436, 438.

[39] Jacques de Hemricourt, 'Patron de la temporalité du pays de Liège', 55–7.

election of *bourgmestres*, although still composed of guildsmen, was to be chosen by a commission manned by representatives of bishop and city.[40]

 This uncertain constitutional position of the guilds meant, on the one hand, that their members were often more easily disposed to engaging in revolt. On the other hand, it also led to divisions both between and within guilds, which added centrifugal tendencies to an already volatile political system. In the early 1430s all these tensions culminated in a coalition struck between certain guilds, or splinter groups thereof, and the powerful Datin family. Having played a prominent role in Liège politics for more than two decades, Walthier Datin had found himself expelled from the city in 1430. Although once antagonists of the guilds, Walthier and his family now became champions of guild interests. They called for a reform of the guild system and promised to restore the role which guilds had played in the election of *bourgmestres* prior to the changes of 1424.[41] This was partly successful and on 25 July 1432, the traditional day of the *bourgmestres'* election in Liège, members of the tanners', drapers', and especially the miners' guilds occupied the city square and forced through the election of Walthier's cousin Wilhem as *bourgmestre* in addition to a change of the voting system.[42] However, the guild community's support for the Datins was uneven. A tribunal of the tanners' guild later claimed that nine tanners had supported the Datins' call for electoral reform, although the guild council had voted to oppose this plan.[43] Six months later, when the Datins sought to take over the city in early January 1433, the majority of the guilds chose to oppose the coup. Led by the blacksmiths, they confronted the Datins in a violent battle on the city square, and only the miners', drapers', tanners', and now also the butchers' guilds continued to support the Datins with their military infrastructure. Divisions also developed within guilds, especially as far as the tanners and butchers were concerned. Three months after the attempted coup, the tanners' guild's own tribunal condemned twenty members for participation in the Datin plot and accused them of gathering in the house of the tanner Andrieu de Lairdieu, from where they had marched to the city square and erected a bulwark against the Datin opponents. Worse still, they had also appropriated the guild banner, the guild's principal means of recognition in battle, contrary to a resolution taken by the guild council the Sunday before.[44]

    [40] Kurth, *La cité de Liège*, III, 353–8; *LO*, 420–9, 490–501, 505–8, 538–48; Stavelot, 164–6; Stavelot (*lat.*), 101–2; Outremeuse, 234.
    [41] For the Datins' position in Liège politics, see Chapter 3, pp. 67–8.
    [42] Stavelot, 244–5, 255–6, 286–9, 291–3.   [43] *LR*, III, 271–80.
    [44] Stavelot, 299–303; *LR*, III, 271–80; De Spiegeler, 'La draperie de la cité de Liège', 78.

The uncertain status of guilds in Liège was somewhat parallelled by their counterparts in Bologna. Guilds in late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Bologna have frequently been seen as politically derelict bodies, at least in comparison with the prominent role which they played as the commune's principal constituent bodies in the thirteenth century. It would perhaps be truer to say that over the fourteenth century their political role had become less clearly defined, as Bologna's guilds also became increasingly dominated by elite families and hereditary in their membership.[45] The re-establishment of the Bolognese commune in March 1376, despite its title of *Signoria del Popolo e delle Arti*, did little to change this. Representatives of Bologna's twenty-six guilds were given an institutional role in the city's urban government through the newly-created college of the *massari*, and the following decades also saw a marked revival in the production of guild statutes. The precise powers of guilds and the *massari* were, however, already the subject of heated debate in October 1376, barely half a year after the revolt. Bologna's new communal statutes of 1376 themselves restricted the powers of guilds: guild membership was not made a precondition for office-holding, and the urban government's principal college, the *anziani*, was given a central role in selecting the *massari* from a pool of candidates proposed to them by the outgoing office-holders.[46]

This unstable situation may have strengthened some of the other institutional ties in Bologna at the expense of guilds, but it also increased the likelihood that guilds and their members would seek new alliances in order to secure their position. This can best be exemplified by turning to the guilds' behaviour in the wake of a coup by the Scacchesi party in September 1393, following which ten members of the rival Maltraversi were purged from communal office. Fissures ran within and between guilds. Within a divided notarial guild, Maltraversi adherents had earlier tried to rig the guild's elections, but the new Scacchesi-led urban government promptly intervened to impose two of their own partisans as leaders of the notaries. Other guilds directly supported the Scacchesi takeover, because the new government pursued several policies that were to the liking of at least some of their members. The statutes of the wool guild were exempted from a revision of communal political procedures by the new regime, and the

[45]   Fasoli, 'Le compagnie delle arti'; Blanshei, *Politics and Justice*, 15–41.
[46]   ASB, Provvigioni in capreto, 1, fos. 1r–3r; *Gli statuti del comune di Bologna*, 428–43 (I.23–9); Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 45–6; *Haec sunt statuta*, 140–5, 152–7. These restrictions were expressive of the more oligarchical tendencies enshrined in the 1376 statutes: see Valeria Braidi's introduction in *Gli statuti del comune di Bologna*, lxx–lxxxviii.

obligation of the guilds' *massari* to have practised their trade for at least five years was reaffirmed. However, this coalition was soon re-ordered, because by January 1394 the guilds saw themselves ousted by a renewed coalition between Scacchesi and Maltraversi. The guilds' unclear status was again curtailed: a part of the college of the *massari* was abolished, and the statutes of the wool guild were subjected to reform.[47] Their insecure position led guildsmen to support insurgent coalitions in 1377, twice in 1399, in 1403, and in 1411. In October 1399, for instance, butchers, second-hand clothes dealers, carpenters, and blacksmiths supported a coalition led by the Scacchesi party because many of them, in Matteo Griffoni's words, felt 'the polity was no longer firm and could easily fracture'. Perhaps the most significant political operation of action groups organized around guilds came in May 1411. An insurgent coalition led by a butcher and sustained by guildsmen—chiefly butchers and second-hand clothes dealers—expelled the papal legate, re-established the independent commune, and re-distributed a large proportion of communal offices amongst artisans until a counter-revolt brought down the regime in August 1412. Unfortunately, this is one of the most poorly documented revolts, but the guildsmen may at least in part have reacted against an earlier reorganization of the guild system by Cardinal Cossa.[48]

A similar picture also emerges for the Bolognese parties, the Maltraversi and Scacchesi. Although their history reached back to the early fourteenth century, they soon came to only vaguely reflect their original composition and aims. The parties, in fact, lacked the more or less secure place which the Parte Guelfa of Florence or the *squadre* of nearby Parma enjoyed, and this turned them into extraordinarily volatile political formations. As we have seen, an attempt at cross-party rule after the revolt of March 1376 failed because splinter groups within the parties rapidly proceeded to pursue their own political ambitions.[49] It is useful to consider in greater detail the final major episode of party conflicts when, between 1398 and 1401, the centrifugal tendencies of Bologna's parties became most apparent.[50] This

[47] ASB, Provvigioni in capreto, 4, fos. 156v–157v, 159v, 198v–199r, 220r–228v; *Corpus*, 449–57; Griffoni, 85–6. See also Tamba, *Il regime del popolo e delle arti*, 29–36, 58–62. For the notarial guild, see Chapter 3, pp. 65–6.
[48] 'quod status non erat plus firmus et quod faciliter rumperetur', Griffoni, 89. For guild participation in 1377, see *Corpus*, 332–3, 336–8; Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 56–7, 83–4. For 1399, this chapter, n. 52. For 1403, *Corpus*, 502–4, 508–10; Griffoni, 93; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 177–9. For 1411, *Corpus*, 537–8; Griffoni, 98–9; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 234; Vancini, 'Una rivoluzione di "Ciompi"'; Fasoli, 'Le compagnie delle arti', 71–2. The surviving sources for all these revolts are rather poor.
[49] See Chapter 3, pp. 71–3.
[50] For more detail on these conflicts see Lantschner, '"The Nourisher of Seditions"'.

extraordinarily volatile phase of Bolognese politics was inaugurated by a revolt of the Maltraversi party on 6 May 1398, which brought to power a coalition around the Maltraversi leader and *dottore* Carlo Zambeccari. This revolt appears to have had a large Maltraversi backing, not least because by June as many as 341 exiles had been recalled, many of whom had been associated with an earlier Maltraversi-led plot in 1389. However, the Maltraversi party was not the sole basis of mobilization for this revolt, because Zambeccari also garnered the support of important pockets of the opposing Scacchesi party, most notably the Gozzadini, who were married to followers of Zambeccari's coalition on the day of the revolt. Zambeccari also rewarded eight prominent families from the bankers' guild, in addition to at least eight members of the *Collegio dei Dottori*, with major political offices. Both of these groups soon benefited from provisions to safe-guard payments of the communally funded debt, the *Monte*, in June and from a reform of the university system in August.[51]

In practice, party structures did prove a weak foundation, because after Zambeccari's natural death in October 1399 the *dottore* and Maltraverso Ugolino Scappi managed to bring down the regime by negotiating a new coalition with certain guilds in addition to members of the Scacchesi party, which, with a majority of 492 against 19 votes in a newly formed *Consiglio Generale*, rehabilitated some thirty-three individuals who had been exiled under the Zambeccari regime.[52] The regime had, in fact, already been challenged by plots sustained by Scacchesi followers earlier in the year. One of these attempts, led by the Gozzadini and Bentivoglio families, ended in a stand-off in March 1399 which was imagined by the illustrator of a Lucchese chronicle and is the subject of the cover illustration of this book. However, the chronicler's characterization of this confrontation as a conflict between two parties (*parti di ciptadini*) is only accurate to a certain extent. In effect, the plots were sustained by different sub-groups under the leadership of the Ramponi, Bentivoglio, Gozzadini,

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[51] ASB, Provvigioni in capreto, 6, fos. 23r, 36r–40r; *Corpus*, 461–3; Griffoni, 87–8; Borselli, *Cronica*, 65; Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna, Archivio Gozzadini, Libro di Ricordi, 1, no. 1 ('Gozzadino Gozzadini'), fo. 3r. For the 1398 revolt, see also Tamba, *Il regime del popolo e delle arti*, 113–54. The members of the *Collegio* were Niccolò Aldovrandi, Giovanni Bentivoglio, Giacomo Isolani, Bartolomeo da Saliceto, Giacomo da Saliceto, Ugolino Scappi, Carlo Zambeccari, and Niccolò da Zappolino. The banking families were the Albergati, Bianchi, Felicini, Foscarari, Gozzadini, Guidotti, Papazoni, and Poeti; see the appendix in Albertani, *Traffico di denaro*, 101–14.

[52] *Corpus*, 466–7, 469–71; Griffoni, 89; Pietro di Mattiolo, Cronaca, 55–8; ASB, Provvigioni in capreto, 6, fos. 67r–69v. See also Tamba, *Il regime del popolo e delle arti*, 155–7. There was another rearrangement in December 1399, when the guilds again abandoned Scappi's coalition; see Chapter 2, p. 43.

and Ghislieri families.[53] The party logic was to be further weakened when Giovanni Bentivoglio, a Scacchesi leader who had returned to the city in the wake of Scappi's revolt, occupied the city square of Bologna on 14 March 1401 and three days later was appointed *gonfaloniere perpetuo* by the city's councils. His coalition was based on offering offices and other rewards to major exponents of the Maltraversi party and the Zambeccari regime, while on the other hand exiling the rival Gozzadini family who had previously belonged to Bentivoglio's own party.[54] Quite clearly, parties had become heavily fragmented and this was neatly summarized in a piece of writing by Matteo Griffoni, himself a Maltraversi partisan who had supported the Zambeccari regime, but in 1401 decided to abandon his 'setta' and to join Bentivoglio's coalition:

> *Madrigal written by Matteo*
> *Griffoni, at the time when Giovanni Bentivoglio*
> *was made lord of Bologna, 1401.*
>
> In order to end the sects and preserve everyone
> in peace with justice and in love
> he was made lord of my fatherland.
>
> It was in the year of the good Creator
> fourteenhundred and one between Monday and Tuesday,
> on the fourteenth day of March.
>
> But I don't esteem you or love you [*ben te voglio*] more,
> if I accept you who comes from a sect other than my own.[55]

Griffoni's support was not long-lasting. When, in June 1402, Bentivoglio's regime was swept away by Milan's conquest of Bologna, he soon switched his allegiance and joined the urban government under the new regime.[56] In this sense, parties were, like guilds, not entirely derelict, but were highly

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[53] Sercambi, *Le croniche*, II, 273–5. The Bolognese sources for these plots are *Corpus*, 463, 465–8; Griffoni, 88; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 36–8, 41–2; ASB, PS, 30, 'Condemnationes (1397–99)', fos. 182r–183r, 200r–202v, 214r–215v.

[54] *Corpus*, 472–3; Griffoni, 90; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 77–82. Supporters of both the May 1398 coalition and the Bentivoglio coalition of March 1401 were Andrea Bentivoglio, Giovanni Bentivoglio, Alberto Bianchi, Petruccio Bianchi, Enrico Felicini, Lippo Ghislieri, Matteo Griffoni, Alberto Guidotti, Musotto Malvezzi, Giovanni Oretti, Giovanni Poeti, and Ugolino Scappi.

[55] '*Madrigale factus per Matheum de / Griffonibus quando Iohannes de Bentevoglis / fuit factus dominus Bononie.1401. /* Per tôr le septe e conservar çascuno / in pace con iustitia et in amore, / de la mia patria fu facto signore. / Correndo gli anni del bon Criatore / milli quatrocentun tra lune e marti, / era de março quatordeci parti. / Però più non te zoa né BEN TE VOGLO, / se d'altra septa che la mia ti coglo', published in Marcon, 'Matteo Griffoni poeta', 128–9.

[56] Griffoni, 91; *Corpus*, 462, 473.

volatile bodies that were gradually superseded by the short-term coalitions forged by men like Zambeccari, Scappi, or Bentivoglio. It is no surprise that in the following decades, the sources only refer to the parties of Bologna very occasionally.[57]

The centrifugal tendencies of Bologna's parties are parallelled by the character of factions in Liège, which were investigated in Chapter 3.[58] Both the Datins and the anti-Datin faction were political forces for relatively limited periods of time, and their hold on the urban political apparatus was often fragile. It is telling that divisions between them cannot neatly be mapped onto the political divides of preceding decades, such as the conflicts between the Hédroits and their opponents.[59] In both Liège and Bologna the predominant forms of political association were not long-term parties or factions, but coalitions that kept changing in their composition. Whether in the aftermath of the 1376 revolt in Bologna or in the various periods of major urban warfare in Liège, the predominant motors of political conflict in both cities were the coalitions that formed on the basis of the mobilization or resources provided by the politicized, but volatile and scarcely institutionalized, ecclesiastical bodies, the university, guilds, and parties.

THE STATE STRUCTURE: STRONG AND SEMI-AUTONOMOUS ENTITIES

The rich but volatile nature of their internal political frameworks did much to condition the systems of conflict of Bologna and Liège, but power-bases outside the city walls also had a crucial impact on the nature of conflict in both cities. As far as the wider state frameworks of both cities are concerned, Liège and Bologna existed within quite different structures. Liège was the capital city of the *pays* of Liège, while Bologna was, for most of this period at least, loosely part of the fragile Papal State. Nevertheless, in structural terms both cities were part of polities in which they were jurisdictionally and politically tied to other strong, semi-autonomous

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[57] This mainly concerned the Maltraversi: *Corpus*, 481, 492–4, 499; Griffoni, 92, 100.

[58] See Chapter 3, pp. 66–8, 70–1, 78–80.

[59] See Chapter 3, p. 67 n. 20 for the Datins' own position, which had been ambiguous. Some of the anti-Datinists had been Hédroits or were related to Hédroits: Henri delle Chaussée, Baldewin de Lardier, Alexandre de Seraing, and Fastré Baré Surlet. At the same time, other anti-Datinists, such as the prominent Bierset family, had themselves been opposed to the Hédroits. See Stavelot, 99, 109–10, 120, 140, 194, 239, 242, 284, 290, 308, 311, 336, 382, 537; Stavelot (*lat.*), 112–13; *CRJB*, 153–5, 161, 181; Stiennon, *Histoire de Liège*, 322; *LO*, 380; 'Notice concernant un manuscrit de l'abbaye de Saint-Jacques', 45–7.

Map 5.1 The *pays* of Liège

entities which were preserved within these wider state structures and fed into urban politics. These came in the form of neighbouring cities in the *pays* of Liège and semi-autonomous power bases in Bologna's contado and wider hinterland.

Liège was closely linked to nearly twenty other *bonnes villes* of the *pays* of Liège. Although they were a fraction of the size of Liège, these cities had all preserved extensive municipal privileges and played a crucial role in the governance of the prince-bishopric (Map 5.1). Since the Peace of Fexhe (1316), Liège and the other cities had been recognized as part of the prince-bishopric's Three Estates (known as the *Sens*) alongside the cathedral chapter and the nobility of the *pays*. Although

the precise role of the *Sens* appears to have shifted in this period, regular consultations took place, especially in periods of war and episcopal vacancies.[60] Such institutionalized interaction between cities created a sense of a shared political sphere: this could lead to severe conflicts, but it could also encourage co-operation between cities beyond their role in the *Sens*. For instance, the prince-bishop's violation of the privileges of the city of Thuin in 1372 provoked the other cities, under the leadership of Liège, to start a war against Bishop John of Arckel that would, with intermissions, last until 1376.[61] Neither Liège nor any of the other cities possessed the leverage of Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres, which, alongside the rural district surrounding Bruges, formed the Four Members (*Leden*), the most important representative assembly of Flanders. Nevertheless, the interlinkage between cities still rendered the prince-bishopric quite different from the major urbanized Northern and Central Italian regional states in which often highly autonomous subject cities were not associated in the same way and, therefore, hardly ever engaged in collective action.[62]

For Liège this also meant that its relationship with the other cities had a crucial impact on its internal and external conflicts. On 1 December 1404, in the midst of a heated conflict with the bishop over the jurisdiction of episcopal courts, Liège and most other *bonnes villes* of the *pays* reaffirmed their 'friendship and confederation (*amitié et confederation*)' for the protection of their respective privileges. The signatories promised each other that if any of the cities should be excommunicated, they would provide support to each other. The alliance also served the ends of internal urban politics: the cities also guaranteed that, if 'sedition or discord (*sedition ou discord*)' arose in any of them, the other members were to resolve the situation without calling in the bishop.[63] This alliance proved crucial. When, in 1406, the crisis with the prince-bishop escalated and the Hédroits came to power in Liège, they relied not only on the support of the city's internal institutions, but also on the backing of nearly all the other *bonnes villes*. Liège and the other cities together elected Thierry de

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[60] Lejeune, *Liège et son pays*, 383–416; Masson, 'La paix de Fexhe'. For examples of meetings of the *Sens*, see Outremeuse, 195–7, 199, 201, 210, 212; Zantfliet, cols. 299–300, 303, 308, 313–14; Stavelot, 108, 111; Stavelot (*lat.*), 77–8; Rivo, 40; *1402*, 376–7; *LR*, III, 48–52.

[61] Outremeuse, 195–208; Zantfliet, cols. 299–307; *1402*, 365–71; Rivo, 23–7; Stavelot (*lat.*), 72–4; *LO*, 328–31, 334–9; *LR*, II, 91–2.

[62] Blockmans, *De volksvertegenwoordiging*, 301–78; see the Introduction, p. 12.

[63] *LR*, III, 81–7. The alliance of 1 December 1404 involved the cities of Huy, Dinant, Tongeren, Sint-Truiden, Maastricht, Fosses, Thuin, Couvin, Looz, Hasselt, Bilzen, Herk-de-Stad, Beringen, Maaseik, Brée, and Stokkem.

Perwez bishop in September 1406; troops from Liège were joined by those of Huy, Tongeren, and Hasselt in their siege of Sint-Truiden to force that city into backing the Hédroit coalition in November 1406; and the following military campaigns were conducted with the help of forces from the other cities, although by the time of the Battle of Othée in September 1408 the bulk of the troops were reported to have come from Liège and Huy alone.[64]

It is difficult see how the revolt of the Hédroits, and substantial warfare which ensued in the whole *pays* of Liège, could have been managed without the co-operation of other cities. An earlier revolt of the Hédroits in Liège in July 1403, in which Thierry de Perwez's father had already been proclaimed *mambour*, had failed to attract such support from within the region. The other cities refused to back the revolt, because in the previous three years they had been in conflict with Liège about the jurisdictional claims of the episcopal tribunal of the *Anneau du Palais*, which Liège, at this point, supported. In May 1402, the cities of Dinant, Tongeren, Sint-Truiden, Thuin, Couvin, Looz, and Hasselt had met to form an alliance against Liège, although only Huy and Sint-Truiden (later joined by Maastricht) eventually sealed this pact. By 1403, when the Hédroits gained the upper hand inside Liège, the other *bonnes villes* refused to support the insurrection and, after a month, Liège was forced into a temporary peace with the bishop. Unsurprisingly, Huy, Maastricht, and Sint-Truiden were rewarded by the bishop with an exemption of their citizens from the jurisdiction of the *Anneau du Palais*.[65]

Political conflict was, in this respect, bound up with the support of the other *bonnes villes*, which were clearly both capable of and interested in intervening in the politics of the prince-bishopric and its capital city. Bologna was, of course, geographically and politically too much of a separate entity within the much looser Papal State for other cities to have interfered in Bolognese conflicts in a similar way. However, its internal politics were influenced by other semi-autonomous bodies, in the form of political players in the city's contado and wider hinterland. Since the thirteenth century, Bologna had, like other Italian cities, increasingly subjected its hinterland to jurisdictional and administrative control by

Map 5.2 The contado of Bologna

the commune as well as economic control by many citizens, thereby creating a common political sphere between the urban and rural worlds (see Map 5.2). However, as a result of Bologna's ever shifting internal and external political situation, the city's hold on its territories was not always secure. Throughout the fourteenth century the administrative structure of the contado was subject to continual changes. After the revolt of 1376, in what would remain a (more or less) lasting arrangement, the commune divided up its contado into twenty-one vicariates. However, in contrast to certain other cities, such as Verona, families controlling major rural power bases remained crucial players in urban politics.[66]

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[66] Braidi's introduction in *Gli statuti del comune di Bologna*, cxxiv–cli; Palmieri, *La montagna bolognese*, 135–229; Scott, *City-State in Europe*, 192–6; Casini, *Il contado bolognese*. Note that Liège politics too was affected by its non-urban hinterland: two major noble families (the Rochefort and Hornes/Perwez) were important players in the city and prince-bishopric, and many of the patrician families of Liège themselves held rural lordships; see Xhayet, *Réseaux de pouvoir*, 217–40.

Important families in Bologna's *montagna*, the mountainous terrain of Bologna's contado to the south of the city, continued to affect political conflicts in Bologna at least until 1400. They played an especially crucial role in the aftermath of the revolt of 1376. The extraordinary and cross-cutting insurgent coalition, which had driven this revolt, had fallen apart within months and was under a variety of threats. The most significant of these came from Taddeo Azzoguidi who had split the Scacchesi party by calling for a return of Bologna's former signorial family, the Pepoli, in December 1376.[67] Exiled from Bologna, Azzoguidi and his supporters sought and received the support of major families and property-holders of the Bolognese *montagna*, in particular the Pepoli, da Loiano, and da Bruscolo, who may, among other grievances, have protested against the contado's recent reorganization by the new urban government. From January 1377, this turned essentially urban conflicts into a fully-fledged war in the *montagna* for which the insurgents conducted military operations from their bases at Pianoro, Loiano, Mugnano, Oliveto, Crespellano, and Serravalle. The eventual peace treaty between the commune and the rebels of 26 May 1377 identified sixty-four insurgents based at Loiano, although there were presumably many more.[68] Apart from a fighting base near the city, contado families had extensive resources and networks of supporters to offer to insurgent coalitions. Judicial records reveal that the Pepoli and da Loiano families maintained extensive networks of messengers and troops in the contado. It is presumably on such a basis that the Scacchesi were able to organize themselves: Azzoguidi and his followers received the booty of robberies committed by Pepoli agents in the contado and possibly relied on such resources to sustain their war effort. One of the rebels, Bartolomeo Liazzari, was able to gather the support of mercenaries from Pianoro and the contadi of Piacenza and Ferrara to operate from the castle of Mugnano before he was captured in January 1377.[69]

The *montagna*-based families had a long-standing interest in Bolognese politics, even though many of them were barred from direct access to the city's governmental machinery as a result of earlier political penalties. Count Antonio da Bruscolo, for instance, had supported

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[67] See Chapter 3, pp. 71–2.

[68] *Corpus*, 330–1; Griffoni, 75. For the peace treaty and later prosecutions, see the documents in Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 89–99.

[69] ASB, PS, 22, fos. 77r–79r, 80r–85r, 118r–119v, and also 86r–87r, 100r–101r, 106r–107r, 108r–110r, 112r–113r.

the insurgent coalition of 1376 and probably hoped for a restoration of some of his contado powers, which had been reduced under the heavy-handed rule of Cardinal Gil Albornoz in the Papal State in the previous decade. During the revolt it was Antonio who was reported to have removed the signet ring of the papal legate. Antonio then joined the Scacchesi's offensive in 1377, but after their defeat sold his three castles to Bologna in 1380 and went to live in the city, where he appears to have supported the Maltraversi party. In October 1399, Antonio was killed in a revolt because he had occupied the house of the exiled Scacchesi leader Francesco Ramponi.[70] The commune of Bologna had every interest in curbing the power bases of such men. When, with the help of papal troops, the insurgent coalition was eventually defeated in May 1377, the peace treaty placed Pianoro under Bolognese jurisdiction, and in subsequent years the commune purchased a significant number of castles from contado families and the Church. Some thirty-eight participants of the rebellion were allowed back into the city, but in subsequent months they were barred from office-holding for ten years or, in the case of the Pepoli, in perpetuity. On 11 August 1377, the *Consiglio Generale*, with a majority of 246 to 24 votes, even passed a measure to punish everyone who would receive, copy, or circulate letters of the Pepoli on pain of a fine of 200 florins.[71] It is true that 1377 was, in some respects, an important turning point after which the commune's grip on the Bolognese *montagna* was steadily extended, not least after the commune installed two captains (*capitani*) specifically to police order in these territories; yet, this did not mean that power bases in the *montagna* became irrelevant to Bolognese political conflict. At least nine families involved in the 1376 and 1377 plots took part in another conspiracy to bring the Pepoli back in 1386.[72] In 1389, the da Panico family—who appear to have held back in 1377—allegedly agreed to raise 2,000 lances for an army led by Giangaleazzo Visconti, ruler of the Milanese state, to conquer Bologna, and also promised to be in a position to make communities on the *montagna* rebel.[73]

[70] *Corpus*, 309–13, 467–71; Griffoni, 89; Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 42–3, 59, 93–4; Palmieri, *La montagna bolognese*, 208–9.

[71] Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 65, 89–97. *Corpus*, 334 states that Pianoro was destroyed.

[72] For 1386, see Chapter 3, p. 73 n. 42.

[73] ASB, PS, 27, 'Banna (1389–90)', fos. 8r–14v; Palmieri, 'La congiura', 204–8. For this plot, see also *Corpus*, 390–9; Griffoni, 83; ASB, Provvigioni in capreto, 3, fos. 307r–308v, 311r–313r. The Bolognese *montagna* was also a refuge for peasants who rebelled against Florence in 1402–3; see Cohn, *Creating the Florentine State*, 165–6, 181–5.

Apart from the *montagna*-based families, there were also those power-brokers who played a major role in Bolognese urban politics and continued to dispose of jurisdictions in other militarily or economically sensitive zones. In the mid-fifteenth century, when rebel properties were liquidated on a grand scale, many oligarchical families were able to extend their hold on Bologna's hinterland, sometimes through reinfeudation.[74] As the case of the Gozzadini family demonstrates, the commune especially failed to extend its control over particular areas in the *pianura bolognese*. A major banking family and political player in Bologna, the Gozzadini held vicariates in the geo-politically critical border area with Ferrara. Probably in return for their support in Milan's war against Giovanni Bentivoglio, they were enfeoffed in 1402 with Cento and Pieve di Cento, territories originally subject to the bishops of Bologna. One year later, the papal legate Baldassarre Cossa himself enfeoffed the Gozzadini with the same lands after they switched to support the papal reconquest of the city.[75] These vicariates—the mere administration of which cost the Gozzadini 400 *lire* per year—were to prove an important base for the Gozzadini's political dealings. After falling out with Cossa almost immediately, the Gozzadini attempted an uprising against the papal regime in October 1403 and then retired to their territories, from where they conducted a six-month war against papal troops. A surviving list of the Gozzadini's arsenal of bombards, crossbows, armaments, and other military equipment—altogether worth 1,650 *lire*—gives a sense of the scale of their military operations and how they also used the financial and military resources of their territorial strongholds for their political ambitions.[76] It was, in fact, a rebellion in Cento and Pieve di Cento which marked the crucial turning point for the Gozzadini's fortunes. Having lost their bases of support, they were forced—under an agreement mediated by Florence, Venice, and Ferrara—to surrender their possessions to the papal legate in April 1404 and flee to neighbouring Ferrara.[77]

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[74] Robertson, *Tyranny under the Mantle of St Peter*, 98–111.

[75] See the documents published in Gozzadini, *Nanne Gozzadini e Baldassarre Cossa*, 435–49, 469–87.

[76] Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna, Archivio Gozzadini, 1, no. 6 ('Castellano di Nanne Gozzadini'), fos. 7r–9v; Gozzadini, *Nanne Gozzadini e Baldassarre Cossa*, 182. See this chapter, pp. 126–7 for the documentation of this war.

[77] *Corpus*, 509; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 152–4; Gozzadini, *Nanne Gozzadini e Baldassarre Cossa*, 527–54.

HIGH LEVELS OF EXPOSURE TO
EXTERNAL DIVISIONS

Endemic divisions between external political players created further space
for the formation of coalitions in Bologna and Liège, and also allowed
coalitions to seek the often considerable infrastructural support of such
external forces. Wars between them, and for a time the international crisis
brought about by the Schism, were no short-term conditions, but shaped
the external frameworks of Bologna and Liège throughout this period to
an arguably greater extent than those of other cities studied in this book.

In Bologna, the protracted instability of the Papal State in this period
and the ongoing warfare in Northern Italy, involving Milan and Florence
in particular, provided much of the background to the city's highly volatile
system of politics.[78] A paradigmatic case is that of the Bolognese revolt of
March 1376 and the unlikely coalition between Scacchesi and Maltraversi
which was formed in its wake. This was, in many ways, a reaction to the
War of the Eight Saints, which the papacy had been fighting against
Florence since 1375, and which had destabilized the entire Papal State
with major cities such as Viterbo, Urbino, and Perugia all rapidly rebelling
against papal authority. Bologna itself had become increasingly enclosed
by anti-papal troops by early 1376 and, amidst rumours that Bologna
was to be delivered to the marquis of Ferrara, the revolt was started by the
Scacchesi leader Taddeo Azzoguidi who asked the cardinal-legate, Noëllet,
to hand over the keys to the city's walls and fortresses. This initially pro-
voked the opposing Maltraversi party—led by Roberto da Saliceto, as well
as the Sabadini and Beccadelli families—to occupy the city's main square
in a rival show of force. However, given the urgent external situation, a
deal which laid the foundations for the subsequent proclamation of the
Signoria del Popolo e delle Arti was eventually struck between the two par-
ties at Taddeo's house. This unlikely and indeed short-lived coalition was
also aided by the prospect of help from Florence, which, immediately
after the revolt, despatched two hundred lances and a red flag with the
inscription *Libertas* for the war against the pope. However, given the fluid
external situation and the nature of the coalition itself, the coalition soon
fragmented and disagreements broke out over whether to seek help from
Milan or the Pepoli, or whether to return to papal obedience. In March
1377, several of the families originally involved in the war against the

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[78] Partner, *Lands of St Peter*, 327–420; Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti*,
99–100, 272–80, 287–90, 334–7; Gherardi, 'La guerra dei fiorentini'.

papacy came to support another coalition, which returned Bologna to papal obedience three months later.[79]

Subsequent periods of intense external warfare also tended to have an impact on Bolognese politics. Some of the rebels who wanted to deliver Bologna to Milan in 1389 were alleged to have planned a speech to the commune's *Consiglio Generale* in which foreign policy considerations were presented as the main justification for their challenge to the ruling Bolognese regime. Pointing to Milan's recent conquest of Verona and Padua, the rebels suggested that it would be much better to find an agreement with, and submit to, Milan than 'to wait until we are bit by bit destroyed'.[80] A similar observation could be made for 1402, when collaboration between Bolognese insurgents and Milan led to Giovanni Bentivoglio being swept away.[81] Significant turmoil in the Papal State again provided the background for a series of plots between 1413 and 1415, culminating in the revolt of January 1416, which entirely freed Bologna from papal rule for more than three years.[82]

External warfare clearly formed a significant backdrop to revolts in Bologna, but it is important to remember that it merely added a further layer to already existing volatilities. This meant that urban action groups did not only passively react to external events, but actively manipulated the protracted external crisis for their benefit. For instance, the Gozzadini, also thanks to their own rural strongholds, were able to play off a variety of warring external powers. It was also because of such external support that they led plots with varying alliances in January 1402, July and October 1403, February 1404, August 1406, March 1412, January 1413, and February 1414.[83] Under the leadership of Nanne Gozzadini, the family's principal wing had first allied with Milan after falling out

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[79] Stefani, 295, 299–300; Griffoni, 72–5. *Corpus*, 299–318, 325–6, 332–3, 336–9; Vancini, *La rivolta dei bolognesi*, 17–18, 39, 53; Gherardi, 'La guerra dei fiorentini', nos. 190, 247, 262–4. The families in question (some of them divided) were the Bargellini, Bianchetti, Danisi, Foscarari, Galluzzi, Griffoni, Osteggiani, Poeti, Ramponi, Salamoni, da Saliceto, Talamazzi, and Torelli.

[80] 'sarebbe molto meglio accordarci con lui e darli la terra che d'aspectare d'essere distructi ad poco ad poco', published in Palmieri, 'La congiura', 208–10.

[81] Bosdari, 'Giovanni I Bentivoglio', 257–70.

[82] Zaoli, *Libertas Bononie e papa Martino V*, 1–15.

[83] ASB, PS, 31, 'Sentenze (1403–4)', fos. 8r–9v, 19r–21r, 32r–34v, 79r–82v, 114r–119r; ASB, PS, 32, 'Bandi (1407–8)', fos. 8r–8v; ASB, PS, 34, 'Condempnationes (1412–13)', fos. 49r–49v, 69r–70r; ASB, PS, 34, 'Condempnationes (1412)', fos. 67r–68r, 79r–81v; ASB, PS, 34, 'Banna (1412)', fos. 33r–35v; ASB, PS, 34, 'Condempnationes e Banna (1412–13)', fos. 60r–62v; ASB, PI, 283, no. 4, fos. 32r–33r; ASB, PI, 288, no. 1, fos. 118r–120r, 130r–131v; ASB, PI, 288, no. 4, fos. 85r–86r, 93r–96r; ASB, PI, 301, no. 1, fos. 213r–217r; ASB, Capitano del Popolo, 855, fos. 39r–45v, 74r–75v, 102r–102v; Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna, Archivio Gozzadini, Libro di Ricordi, 1, no. 4 ('Castellano Gozzadini'), fo. 1r; *Corpus*, 476–7, 493, 502–11,

with Giovanni Bentivoglio in 1401 and joined the Milanese coalition which eventually conquered Bologna and swept away Bentivoglio in June 1402.[84] Shortly after this, the Gozzadini broke with Milan over their rewards for this co-operation and were exiled by the Milanese governor of Bologna. Having already enjoyed close relations with the curia as papal bankers since December 1401, the Gozzadini now joined the military operations of Cardinal Cossa who regained Bologna, with Gozzadini help, in September 1403.[85] By the end of 1403, the family also fell out with Cardinal Cossa, possibly over financial questions, and found themselves at war with him in early 1404. Given that papal rule north of the Apennines was being consolidated in this decade, this was a bad time to fight Cossa, but the Gozzadini again benefited from their external relations and found refuge in Ferrara, where Nanne Gozzadini was a member of the marquis's household.[86]

Political conflict in Liège was also set in a wider external political framework, which was conditioned by the ambitions of Burgundy, France, and not least the Empire, under whose nominal jurisdiction the prince-bishopric remained. The Hédroit coalition, as we have seen, was ultimately defeated by an international coalition headed by the duke of Burgundy whose long arm reached into Liège politics on other occasions too.[87] Nevertheless, the impact of external destabilization on this already volatile political system should also not be overstated: the Hédroit coalition, for instance, enjoyed very feeble international support, because an alliance with the duke of Orléans, apparently struck some time before 1404, had produced few tangible benefits.[88] A further alliance with the duke of Brabant in September 1407 also disappointed the rebels when

515–16, 518–20, 539–40, 544; Griffoni, 90, 93–4, 99, 101; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 100, 134–8, 143–59; Gozzadini, *Nanne Gozzadini e Baldassarre Cossa*, 460–9, 488–99, 509–21, 499–509, 564–8.

[84] *Corpus*, 472–3, 479–80, 487–8; Griffoni, 90–2; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 78, 107–9.

[85] *Corpus*, 490–2, 496–7; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 123–4, 126–9; Gozzadini, *Nanne Gozzadini e Baldassarre Cossa*, 458–69; Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna, Archivio Gozzadini, Instrumenti, 111, no. 7.

[86] *Corpus*, 502–11, 524; Griffoni, 93–4; Pietro di Mattiolo, *Cronaca*, 134–8; 143–59; Gozzadini, *Nanne Gozzadini e Baldassarre Cossa*, 244–51, 276–82, 488–554; Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna, Archivio Gozzadini, Libro di Ricordi, 1, no. 4 ('Castellano Gozzadini'), fos. 1r–2v; ASB, PS, 31, 'Sentenze (1403–4)', fos. 8r–9v, 19r–21r, 32r–34v, 79r–82v, 114r–119r; ASB, PI, 283, no. 4, fos. 32r–33r.

[87] *CRJB*, 170–1, 198; Stavelot, 140–2; Monstrelet, I, 351; Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 50–66.

[88] Minder, *La rivalité Orléans-Bourgogne*, esp. 51–3, 59–63: note that the only prove for direct Orléans involvement concerns support for the Hédroits' conquest of the fortress of Bouillon.

the duke was reluctant to help them secure the support of the city of Maastricht.[89]

The one form of long-term external destabilization that did crucially influence the patterns of conflict in Liège, unsurprisingly for a prince-bishopric, was the Great Schism. The Hédroit revolt of 1406–8 would have been unthinkable without this background. The ongoing Schism allowed the Hédroits to elect Thierry de Perwez as bishop, to subtract obedience from the Roman pope Innocent VII in October 1406, and to submit to the obedience of Avignon by early 1407. In March 1407, Thierry—who also happened to be the great-nephew of Eustache Persand de Rochefort, Liège's former pro-Avignon bishop—obtained confirmation of his election from the Avignonese pope Benedict XIII in addition to a dispensation to take all holy orders in one day. Only once he had received papal confirmation did Thierry feel encouraged to demand an oath from all churchmen in Liège, to confiscate all goods of fugitive or disobedient holders of benefices, and to appoint Hédroit supporters to vacant prebends.[90] In any case, the opponents of the Hédroits quickly sought and received the support of the Roman pope Gregory XII, who authorized the exiled prince-bishop and chapter to annul all of Thierry's acts, and sought to mobilize the support of papal adherents in Cologne, Utrecht, and Ghent.[91]

The Hédroit movement had emerged from deep-seated divisions which pitted Roman against Avignonese supporters in Liège throughout the 1380s and 1390s. Liège had, in fact, been a particular battleground between the popes of Rome and Avignon because each party had every interest in maintaining or winning over this important prince-bishopric close to the Avignon-supporting (and later neutral) lands of the French crown. Because of the politicized nature of Liège's ecclesiastical apparatus, divisions over the Schism inevitably played into urban politics on two different levels. On one level, there were long-standing divisions between the Romanist prince-bishop John of Bavaria and a large part of the population which was always more willing to compromise its loyalty to Rome. In June 1399, Liège and the other *bonnes villes* had exploited the prince-bishop's temporary absence to withdraw obedience from Rome. John of Bavaria

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[89] *LR*, III, 105–6; *LO*, 422; *CRJB*, 170–8; Stavelot, 111–12; Monstrelet, I, 144–6; but see especially Tourneur, 'Antoine de Bourgogne'. The Hédroits were also supported by the deposed Emperor Wenceslas: Stavelot, 107; Stavelot (*lat.*), 110.

[90] *LR*, III, 91–4, 96–8; *CRJB*, 161–4; Stavelot, 99–100; Stavelot (*lat.*), 107–8; Monstrelet, I, 143; 'Notice concernant un manuscrit de l'abbaye de Saint-Jacques', 22–3; Valois, *La France et le Grand Schisme*, IV, 66. Thierry was, however, also related to Eustache's Romanist opponent, Arnold of Hornes.

[91] 'Notice concernant un manuscrit de l'abbaye de Saint-Jacques', 35–48; 'Quelques nouveaux documents', 174–85; *LR*, III, 99–105.

was later forced to ratify this decision, but in October 1405 he again returned the city to Romanist obedience—until the Hédroits once again reversed this decision exactly a year later.[92] On another level, divisions between supporters of Rome and Avignon also split Liège society itself. Throughout the 1380s, there is considerable evidence for the presence of Avignon supporters in various churches of Liège and for clerics from Liège who received prebends in areas under Avignon control. The cathedral chapter itself had only dropped its support for the Avignon-supporting bishop-elect Eustache Persand under external pressure in July 1378, and had declared its allegiance for Rome, perhaps on demand from the emperor, as late as 1379. These ongoing divisions came to a head in 1383, when the prince-bishop and the Liège citizen Henri Frérart (who, as it happened, had already objected to Eustache's election in 1378) uncovered an alleged plot in Liège by suspected Avignon supporters associated with the collegiate churches of Saint-Barthélemy and Sainte-Croix, and instituted a commission to investigate the presence of Avignon followers in all churches.[93] It may be no coincidence that members of the same churches came again to support the Hédroits in the early 1400s. The Hédroit coalition was, of course, a much broader movement which brought together various urban and extra-urban sections of the population for a variety of reasons, but the external divisions of the Schism contributed to an intensification of conflict in an already politically volatile city.

All these multi-layered conflicts show how the political systems of Bologna and Liège were characterized by continuous and generally unbounded fluctuations in the relationships between ecclesiastical institutions, university, guilds, parties, and other corporate units in the wider polity, as well as external players. However chaotic it may seem, the system had its logic, according to which political groups were encouraged to negotiate with each other around the multiple units of these urban arenas in an attempt to forge new coalitions, which often transcended prior allegiances. The number of organizational structures and their fragile incorporation into a coherent urban framework meant that building lasting

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[92] On 1399, *LR*, III, 52–60, 63; Outremeuse, 235–6; *CRJB*, 148–9; Stavelot (*lat.*), 102; *1402*, 440–1; Valois, *La France et le Grand Schisme*, III, 283–6. On 1405, *CRJB*, 159; 'Une lettre d'Innocent VII'. For the extensive Romanist propaganda in Liège, see Outremeuse, 221, 228–9; Stavelot (*lat.*), 96–7; *1402*, 419–20; *Suppliques et lettres de Urbain VI et de Boniface IX*, 32–5.

[93] Valois, *La France et le Grand Schisme*, I, 273; *LR*, I, 461–3, 476–82. On the ties of Clement VII and his supporters to Liège, see *LR*, I, 273, 275–6, II, 298; Millet, *Les chanoines*, 332–3, 343–4, 348–9, 396; Nelis, 'La collation des bénéfices', 50–4, 59. For the 1378 election and Avignon supporters in the chapter, see this chapter, pp. 103–4. On 1383 and later, see Outremeuse, 216–17, 229; Stavelot (*lat.*), 85–6.

alliances was difficult, and the political balance of Bologna and Liège was often in considerable danger. Even so, we have already seen in Chapter 2 that even urban wars often involved relatively low levels of mortality or destruction of infrastructure. Changes of regime could be disruptive, but promised benefits for insurgents, while leaving their opponents with the realistic chance of altering the political balance once more. Whether it was the uncertainty among the tanners of Liège over whether to join the Datin coalition in 1433, or the complicated political relationships of the doctors of law from the Bolognese da Saliceto family, these political operators may have made life difficult for themselves, but ultimately they followed the logic of politics in their cities.

6

Florence and Tournai

Constitutional Systems of Conflict

This chapter considers urban systems of conflict in which constitutional bargaining played an especially important role. Conflicts in cities characterized by such systems predominantly revolved around direct negotiations between contending groups and manifested themselves in the creation and manipulation of assemblies and commissions, the use and abuse of electoral rules, and in the appropriation of judicial procedures such as exile or other means of excluding opponents from political life.

In his *Discourses on Livy*, Niccolò Machiavelli argued that there was nothing that could make a republic as 'stable and steady' as the availability of constitutional mechanisms to channel conflicts. By contrast, 'when the humours [of the population] do not have an outlet by which they may be vented ordinarily', Machiavelli reasoned, 'they have recourse to extraordinary modes that bring a whole republic to ruin'.[1] Political processes in cities characterized by such a system of conflict were, however, not necessarily more 'orderly'. Bargaining through constitutional mechanisms often raised, rather than lowered, the political temperature in cities because they could be manipulated, distorted, or even changed in the course of conflicts. Furthermore, a tradition of violent protest by factions, guilds, and other groups often continued to exist alongside such processes of bargaining. This could occasionally culminate in revolts which occurred at the pinnacle of the ongoing negotiations that lay at the heart of these systems of conflict. The term 'constitution' is, therefore, only used here in a restricted sense. It refers to the relatively long-lived and regularized system of interactions within and across political units in the urban arenas of Florence and Tournai, whether this concerns elections, consultative

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[1] Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, 23–6 (I.7), 85–9 (I.40).

and legislative processes, or other recurring patterns of interaction which may broadly be called constitutional mechanisms. My usage of this term should not imply stability, because constitutional mechanisms were so open to manipulation and often concealed considerable levels of conflict that could escalate into dramatic revolts. The other cities of this study, of course, also had 'constitutions' of sorts: however, the political systems of Bologna and Liège were too volatile for this term to have any useful application; while in those of Lille and Verona other factors intervened to limit the relevance of these cities' relatively few constitutional mechanisms for the conduct of conflict.

Constitutional systems of conflict naturally covered a wide range of different scenarios. It is for this reason that this chapter considers two cities, which, of the pairs considered in this book, were most unlike each other, and are best discussed sequentially rather than in a fully integrated comparison. Florence was one of Italy's few remaining independent city-states and by the early fifteenth century had itself become the capital city of a territorial state stretching across 11,000 square kilometres. In addition to a multiplicity of other councils and commissions, there were three governmental colleges (also known as *tre maggiori*) which were renewed every two to four months: the most powerful was the Signoria, formed by eight priors and headed by the *gonfaloniere della giustizia*; it was assisted by the advisory colleges of the sixteen *gonfalonieri* and the twelve *buonuomini*.[2] Tournai, by contrast, was a city under the jurisdiction of the crown of France, with which it also entertained close relations, and was subject to its various political agencies. However, Tournai was also one of the most autonomous cities in the French kingdom. For most of this period, it was ruled by an annually renewed urban government, which, although less complex than that of Florence, similarly consisted of three colleges (the échevins, *jurés*, and *eswardeurs*, from 1423 afforced by a fourth composed by guild representatives) and was headed by two *prévôts*.[3] In spite of their obvious differences, Florence and Tournai displayed similar patterns of conflict. Both cities experienced urban warfare at specific moments in the period under investigation in this study. At the same time, conflicts in both cities were commonly characterized by constitutional bargaining and

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[2] For a short description, see Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society*, 57–71. The best discussions of Florentine urban government in this period are Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus* and Tanzini, *Il governo delle leggi*. The most detailed discussion, although from a highly institutionalist standpoint, is Guidi, *Il governo della città-repubblica di Firenze*.

[3] Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 22–41, 205–19. Between 1332 and 1340, as well as between 1365 and 1371, Tournai was also under the jurisdiction of a royal governor who ruled alongside a differently constituted urban government; see d'Herbomez, 'Les constitutions de Tournai'.

different forms of protest out of which the more confrontational moments of revolt and warfare also grew. For both cities, historians have emphasized the 'cataclysmic' nature of the revolts which happened, but they have not always given as much consideration to the patterns of conflict outside these highly dramatic moments of bitter confrontation.

Political conflict in Florence has been studied extensively for the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, but conflict in later periods has, with some exceptions, been given less weight in the historiography. Several scholars have suggested that, following the shock of the Ciompi revolt (July 1378) and the broadly-based guild regime established in its wake (defeated in January 1382), a new form of politics came to dominate Florence. Numerous indicators show that the Florentine patrician elite closed in on itself and that the city was governed through an increasingly narrow oligarchical regime. Divisions only re-emerged very visibly in the factional strife of the late 1420s and early 1430s in the wake of which the Medici family became the city's dominant political force. Under their aegis, a new, if tenuous, compromise was struck that was to last, with some interruptions, for most of the fifteenth century.[4] This, however, is only one possible narrative. If viewed from a less regime-centred perspective, conflict remained a critical feature of the Florentine political system. Samuel Cohn has pointed to the continual conflict between social classes within the city, and between the city and peasants in the contado, although the opportunities for the *popolo minuto* to organize major protests did decline in the course of the fifteenth century. Other historians, such as Andrea Zorzi, Fabrizio Ricciardelli, and Riccardo Fubini, have emphasized that factional conflict in the higher echelons of society remained a critical feature of Florentine politics, as it had been throughout Florentine history.[5]

Since the creation of the Florentine commune, the city had experienced divisions between Guelfs and Ghibellines, magnates and *popolani*, Blacks and Whites, as well as several other factional groupings. It has already been argued that, as late as the 1370s, the conflict between the Parte Guelfa and the Ciompi coalition emerged out of earlier factional divides. Such divisions and their concomitant political culture did not disappear, even

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    [4] For this narrative, see especially Najemy, *A History of Florence*; for the period of the 1380s and 1420s, which is crucial here, see Brucker, *Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*; Molho, 'Florentine Oligarchy and the Balìe'; Molho, 'Politics and the Ruling Class'; Witt, 'Florentine Politics and the Ruling Class'; Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus*, 263–300; Kent, 'Florentine Reggimento'.
    [5] Cohn, *Laboring Classes*, 129–77; Cohn, *Creating the Florentine State*, 244–67; Zorzi, *La trasformazione di un quadro politico*, 91–177; Fubini, 'Dalla rappresentanza sociale alla rappresentanza politica'; Ricciardelli, *Politics of Exclusion*, 202–49. See also the older work of Radó, *Dalla repubblica fiorentina alla signoria medicea*.

if oligarchical consolidation progressively altered Florentine politics. This chapter discusses the crucial period of transition between the Ciompi revolt and the establishment of the Medici regime. The hallmark of factional politics in this period was that it was not ordinarily conducted through urban warfare, but through constitutional bargaining, the legalistic veneer of which often concealed the conflictual character of interactions between rival factions. The decades under investigation saw the rise of the Albizzi faction, which established itself through several constitutional mechanisms that were characteristic of Florentine factional politics: the use of special commissions to undermine ordinary legislative procedures, the manipulation of electoral processes, and the elimination of opponents through judicial means. Another sign of the continuing presence of factional politics is that, between the 1390s and 1410s, the opposition to the Albizzi—led by the Alberti and Medici, among other families—organized several plots. Consonant with the logic of this system of conflict, their main aim appears not to have been full-blown revolt, but the targeted assassination of Albizzi supporters and the pursuit of constitutional tactics which resembled those employed by their opponents. Following some realignments, the divisions between the Albizzi and their opponents culminated in the factional confrontations of the later 1420s and early 1430s, which have been studied extensively by Dale Kent and are largely outside the purview of this chapter. After the installation of the Medici-controlled regime in the autumn of 1434, factional conflict was transformed or diverted, but resurfaced in the major challenges to the Medici in 1458, 1466, and 1478 until finally breaking out into the open in the turbulent 1490s.[6]

Tournai's patterns of conflict were not entirely dissimilar to those of Florence. Tournai also experienced a major revolt in June 1423, when a coalition of patricians and guildsmen took over the urban government and established a guild regime, exiled their opponents, and affirmed the city's obedience to the dauphin of France, who was then at war with a regime headed by England and Burgundy. Throughout the 1420s Tournai politics remained volatile and the city experienced two further overturnings of government: in 1425, when the guild element in the coalition was strengthened; and in 1428, when a new coalition of lower-ranking guildsmen and patricians eliminated the earlier leaders of 1425 from the urban government. These revolts have been characterized as a 'democratic revolution' driven by a French 'nationalist' coalition within Tournai, or as a class revolution advanced by artisans and guildsmen, but they were

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[6] For the Medici regime and its beginnings, see especially Kent, *Rise of the Medici*; Rubinstein, *Government of Florence under the Medici*; Padgett and Ansell, 'Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici'.

actually rooted in a longer history of political competition.[7] Outside the better-studied years between 1423 and 1428, Tournai politics were characterized by ongoing political conflicts along a number of dividing lines, only one of which was that between patricians and guildsmen who, for certain periods, were excluded from urban government. Such conflicts principally crystallized around a multiplicity of constitutional mechanisms. Tournai's strong parishes and, for a while, its guilds allowed and stimulated direct negotiations between rival groups. This was further exacerbated by the plurality of external political agencies, which, as a result of Tournai's highly autonomous status, could be drawn into urban conflicts and were often played off against each other. Major internal political crises over urban governance in 1365 and 1451 were quickly absorbed into this jurisdictional framework and transformed into multidimensional conflicts, which were fought through several urban and extra-urban channels. Although this system of conflict was remarkably constant over the years, strains in the city's external framework in the wake of civil war in France led to its temporary disaggregation and the revolts of the 1420s.

Florence's and Tournai's predominant patterns of conflict are reflected in these cities' particularly wide range of administrative sources, which often recorded constitutional bargaining in great detail. For Florence, I have worked on five archival series which documented legislative and electoral procedures that could become the subject of conflict: the *Provvisioni*, bills which were proposed by the Signoria in consultation with the advisory colleges and which required the agreement of the city's legislative councils; the *Libri fabarum*, which recorded the votes of these councils; the *Tratte*, which listed the Florentines drawn to hold communal offices; the *Pratiche*, the minutes of consultative meetings of Florentines specially summoned by the Signoria; as well as the *Balìe*, the ordinances of the eponymous special commissions, which, for a limited period of time, could override normal legislative procedures. There were, of course, several more series which emanated from the Florentine chancery, as well as records produced by agencies—such as the guilds, the Parte Guelfa, or the city's judicial officers—which were less directly linked to the governmental apparatus.[8] Tournai's civic archives, once said to be one of the richest of Northern Europe, were almost entirely lost during a German air-raid in 1940. Fortunately, large parts of the documentation generated by the city's

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[7] Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*; Verriest, *Les luttes sociales*, 1–27. For more recent studies, see Small, 'Centre and Periphery' and 'Robert Campin et la "révolution démocratique"'; Lantschner, 'Revolts and the Political Order of Cities'.

[8] Barbadoro, *Le fonti*; Marzi, *La cancelleria*; Viti and Zaccaria, *Archivio delle Tratte*. For an excellent discussion of the Florentine governmental sources in their historical context, see Tanzini, *Il governo delle leggi*, esp. 17–153.

urban government—including ordinances, petitions, and council min-
utes—had already been edited in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries
by the *Société historique et littéraire de Tournai* and its successor, the *Société
historique et archéologique*. These can, in any case, be supplemented by a
range of records emanating from external jurisdictional agencies, includ-
ing the *Parlement* of Paris and royal ordinances.[9]

 Conflicts, especially those occurring in the wake of revolts, also fea-
tured prominently in Tournai's contemporary chronicles.[10] In Florence
too, the Ciompi revolt generated a famously extensive repertoire of nar-
rative sources.[11] For the following decades of Florentine history, scholars
have discerned a declining interest in direct political commentary in the
ever increasing amounts of memorial writing, diaries, and commonplace
books. John Najemy has seen these developments as indicative of more
consensus-driven politics and the growing passivity of the Florentine
patriciate, which was now weary of factional conflict.[12] This is true for
some writers, but for the decades analysed in this chapter a relatively large
quantity of political commentary is, albeit in different guises, available.
An anonymous diary (known as *Panciatichiano 158*), a chronicle linked
to the Minerbetti family, as well as the memories of the Florentine notary
ser Naddo da Montecatini all provide close commentaries on Florentine
public life and its political conflicts.[13] Some writers gave very personal
insights into the persistence of factional conflict. In his *ricordi*, the patri-
cian Bonaccorso Pitti described how he had himself become the victim
of orchestrated judicial prosecutions and the manipulation of electoral
procedures, because his family found itself in opposition to a rival group
headed by the Ricasoli family. The wool merchant Giovanni Morelli's
ricordi focused heavily on Giovanni's personal spiritual and family life,
but also included commentaries on his political fortunes as an outsider
under the Albizzi regime and advice to his son on how to cultivate political
relationships in the factional context of Florentine politics. Tellingly, both
Pitti and Morelli started writing their diaries at crucial junctures when
they feared exclusion from Florentine politics: Pitti in 1412, when the

   [9] Jardez, 'Les derniers jours'; particularly important are the detailed editions of docu-
ments by urban governments in *TR*, I, II, and III, and the *pièces justificatives* published in
Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 466–551.
   [10] This concerns especially the *Chronique* and the *Croniques*. A third chronicle seems
closely linked to the *Chronique*, but only adds a few passages: 'Troubles à Tournai', 304–5,
314–15, 323–4. *Chronica Aegidii Li Muisis* and *Chronicon Aegidii Li Muisis*, the two chroni-
cles by Gilles le Muisit, who documents conflicts less extensively, end by 1352.
   [11] See Trexler, 'Herald of the Ciompi'.
   [12] Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus*, 301–17. See also Pezzarossa, 'La memorialistica
fiorentina'; Jones, 'Florentine Families and Florentine Diaries'.
   [13] *Alle bocche della piazza*; Minerbetti, *Cronica*; Naddo da Montecatini, *Memorie storiche*.

conflict with the Ricasoli escalated, and Morelli in 1393, when his family was accused of collusion with the rebellious Alberti family. As Pitti explained, the purpose of his writing was to show to his sons, descendants, and any other readers what can happen to 'those who defend themselves against someone greater and more powerful'.[14]

The systems of conflict of Florence and Tournai were heavily conditioned by the nature of their urban political arenas. First, both cities had in common the durability of certain political units which were relatively well-integrated into the urban political process. Florence's constitution in many ways reached back to the Ordinances of Justice of 1293, which had established a guild-based political system which, if only in its most basic principles, was still in place a century later. The city also had relatively stable and long-standing factions, which in many ways behaved like other durable political units and had developed their own channels for the negotiation of conflict. Tournai's jurisdictional organization varied to a somewhat greater extent, but its parishes had played an established role in urban governance since 1187, and Tournai's guilds also became relatively well-integrated into the urban political process from 1423. All this meant that, in both cities, the rapid formation and transformation of coalitions, so characteristic for Bologna and Liège, was a less prominent feature of urban politics. Action groups could organize more securely around relatively stable political units, and relied on appropriating and manipulating the constitutional mechanisms attached to them.

A second feature of these systems of conflict is the pluralistic frameworks of state apparatuses which further encouraged, but also channelled, conflict. Because Florence was an independent city-state, and Tournai was a highly and unusually autonomous city, city dwellers had several channels at their disposal through which to negotiate their grievances. In Florence, a plurality of communal institutions allowed rival political groups to manipulate a variety of constitutional mechanisms. This was also true for Tournai, but in this city the protagonists in civic politics could also pursue their conflicts through the multiplicity of external agencies, including the crown of France, the *Parlement*, or a variety of regional players. The outbreak of the Ciompi revolt against the backdrop of the War of the Eight Saints and the disaggregation of Tournai's political system in the wake of external warfare illustrate that the political balance in these cities was nonetheless vulnerable, particularly when faced with outside pressures. These political systems, in fact, encouraged such high levels of negotiation

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[14] Morelli, *Ricordi*, 261–4, 274–5, 280–3. 336–7, 427–31, 537; Pitti, 'Ricordi', 441–4, 448–60, 467, 490–4, 497: 'a chi contro ad alcuno grande e possente più di lui piglia alcuna difesa' (448).

and conflict that unexpected escalations, although rare, also remained within their logic.[15]

FLORENCE

Bargaining through Factions

Several political units were constant features of the Florentine system of conflict for relatively long periods of time. The city's twenty-one guilds had been a constitutive element of the Florentine communal apparatus since the Ordinances of Justice of 1293, and were tightly integrated into the city's existing constitutional mechanisms. This system was still in place in our period, because compulsory guild membership and quota arrangements between major and minor guilds continued to constitute the basis on which communal offices were allocated. Florentine historians have rightly pointed out that guilds progressively lost their influence, but, in comparison with the other cities studied in this book and indeed the majority of neighbouring Italian cities, Florence was remarkable for its retention of this institutional apparatus which undoubtedly also contributed to the longevity of other political structures in the city.[16]

In this section, I shall concentrate on another durable political unit, Florence's factions whose own institutional memory also reached back to the thirteenth century. As seen in Chapter 3, factions could themselves be relatively stable political institutions around which action groups organized and whose access to constitutional mechanisms they could manipulate. Although the Parte Guelfa had seen its power dramatically reduced in the wake of the Ciompi revolt, this did not eliminate the importance of factional conflict as a driving force in Florentine political processes. Machiavelli himself judged in his *Florentine Histories* that, even after the Ciompi, 'the humours of the parties (*gli umori delle parti*) were ever alert' in Florence, and conflicts such as those between the Albizzi and the Medici 'could never be altogether eliminated'.[17] Factions, in fact, also provided the grid within which political conflict was to take place in the decades after the defeat of the Ciompi-inspired guild regime.[18] The principal faction which came to dominate Florentine

[15] For the Ciompi revolt and the War of the Eight Saints, see Chapter 3, pp. 73–7, 80–6.
[16] Najemy, 'Guild Republicanism', 58–67; Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus*, 267–72, 274, 279–81. For the behaviour of action groups based on the Florentine guilds, see especially Najemy's study of the 1370s: ' "Audiant Omnes Artes" ', 80–6.
[17] Machiavelli, *Florentine Histories*, 139 (III.25), 147 (IV.2).
[18] For the end of the guild regime and the factional conflicts which followed in the 1380s, see Radó, *Dalla repubblica fiorentina alla signoria medicea*, 58–148; Brucker, *Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 60–89.

politics in this period was led by the Albizzi family. The Albizzeschi, as they were also known, were closely associated with the patricians and guildsmen that had brought down the guild regime in January 1382. They also inserted themselves into a long-standing culture of factional conflict and enjoyed very close links to the Parte Guelfa, in which the Albizzi family had played a leading role in the previous thirty years. Built on such long-standing ties, the Albizzeschi, like their enemies, made extensive use of varied strategies of constitutional bargaining which were characteristic of factional conflict. With ready and relatively stable access to such mechanisms, urban warfare was not as attractive an option as it was in Bologna. In his diary, Giovanni Morelli put it well when he said that one hundred years earlier 'it was more common to fight one another through the sword in one's hand rather than through beans [used for voting in communal magistracies], as is done today'.[19]

The most significant stepping stone in the Albizzeschi's rise to power was the coup staged by Maso degli Albizzi in October 1393. The nature of this coup is crucial because it clearly reflected the logic of Florence's system of conflict. In the formulation of one chronicler, the actions of Maso and his partisans amounted to a full-blown 'tumult (*romore*)'—although this was to be a *romore alla fiorentina*, which involved hardly any violence, but allowed the Albizzi grouping to make its claim in the Florentine political process through a variety of ordinary and extraordinary, manipulated and manipulable constitutional mechanisms.[20] In reaction to questionable allegations of an alleged plot organized by the Alberti family, Maso—who was then *gonfaloniere della giustizia*—moved quickly to exploit this occasion for his own benefit.[21] On 18 October, he called a special *parlamento*, which, in legal terms, was the sovereign assembly of the Florentine people whose resolutions were not bound by and could override all other Florentine legislation. On the Signoria's proposal the *parlamento* conferred extraordinary authority on a special commission (*balìa*), which was composed of sixty-eight representatives of Florence's most important offices (the governmental colleges, captains of the Parte Guelfa, *Otto della Guardia*, and *Sei della Mercanzia*) and was later reinforced by dozens of hand-picked representatives. For the following twelve days, the *balìa* held 'total, integral, full, free, and absolute authority and power, subject to no conditions and limited by no laws, as is possessed by the whole *popolo* and

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[19] 'E' s'usava allora di nimicarsi più colla spada in mano che colle fave, come si fa al dì di oggi', Morelli, *Ricordi*, 130–1; see also his observations in 196–7, 281–3.
[20] *Alle bocche della piazza*, 162.
[21] Naddo da Montecatini, *Memorie storiche*, 140–1; *Alle bocche della piazza*, 149–62; Minerbetti, *Cronica*, 179; ASF, Balìe, 19, fo. 22r. See also Radó, *Dalla repubblica fiorentina alla signoria medicea*, 149–97.

commune of Florence and the whole *universitas* of the *popolo* and com-
mune of the city of Florence'.[22]

The *balìa* could, therefore, effectively bypass all normal legislative proce-
dures, and Maso's followers could pursue their political ambitions through
the *balìa*'s jurisdictional powers. Among other measures, the *balìa* exiled six
of the suspected plotters and substantially extended the Florentine Signoria's
powers of policing.[23] Most controversially, it enacted changes to manipulate
the city's electoral system, which was based on the screening of potential can-
didates for office-holding in a process known as scrutiny. The outcomes of
scrutinies mattered enormously because all office-holders were drawn from
the pool of candidates approved in such exercises. As Nicolai Rubinstein
and John Najemy have shown, the ability to influence this process was a
paramount instrument of Florentine politics across a period of more than
200 years.[24] Within three days of acquiring power, the *balìa* of 1393 ordered
an entirely new scrutiny to be conducted under its auspices. Name-tickets of
the successful candidates would then not only be placed, as was customary,
into a new pouch (*borsa*) from which future office-holders would be drawn,
but would also be inserted into the *borse* of two earlier scrutinies of 1382 and
1391 which had to be used up until the new pouch could be opened. The
balìa also ordered the burning of an entire *borsa* of a controversial scrutiny in
1385, and boosted the powers of *accoppiatori* (the officials in charge of insert-
ing the name tickets) to transfer name tickets between *borse* and into a special
little pouch (*borsellino*) reserved for four out of nine officers on the Signoria.
Finally, in an unprecedented move, the *balìa* proceeded to directly appoint
the Signoria for the months of November and December outside the normal
process of drawing name tickets.[25]

The occasion of the new scrutiny in 1393 allows us better to understand
the Albizzi grouping and its ties to long-standing factional structures in
the city. Representatives from thirty-five families on the committee put in
charge of the scrutiny turned out to belong to the top forty-three, mostly
long-established, families who had the tightest grip on Florentine gov-
ernment between 1382 and 1399.[26] Nearly half of them represented the

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[22] 'totalis integra plena libera et absoluta auctoritas et balia, nullis conditionibus subdita
aut legibus limitata, et quam et prout habet totus populus et communis Florentie et tota
universitas populi et communis civitatis Florentie', ASF, Balìe, 19, fo. 1v.

[23] ASF, Balìe, 19, fos. 6r–10r, 23r–28r, 46v–48v.

[24] Rubinstein, *Government of Florence under the Medici*; Najemy, *Corporatism and
Consensus*.

[25] ASF, Balìe, 19, fos. 15v–16v, 30v–31v, 36v–37r. For these reforms, see Najemy,
Corporatism and Consensus, 286–92.

[26] The membership of the 187-man strong scrutiny committee, largely constituted by
the *balìa* itself, is published in Ninci, 'Lo "Squittino del Mangione"', 208–14; the top forty-
three families are listed in Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus*, 298.

absolute minimum of those most fiercely opposing the Ciompi in 1378.[27] By contrast, members of only five of the thirty-five families (some of them politically divided at the time as well as in 1393) had been implicated in that revolt.[28] The results of the scrutiny of 1393 also give a sense of the partisan affiliations of the Albizzeschi. As Laura De Angelis has shown, the scrutiny results particularly benefited those families who had suffered under the guild regime of 1378–82. Roughly a third of the scrutiny's beneficiaries (220 out of 625) had not been successful in one of the previous two scrutinies and it is easy to see why they could have been potential backers of Maso degli Albizzi.[29] In fact, only ten families qualified with five or more members, and most of them were to be important players in the regime.[30] Five of them even belonged to the inner core of the 'oligarchical' faction which was exiled after the triumph of the Medici in 1434.[31]

Maso, in fact, remained a point of reference for decades to come. In 1426, an anonymous bill of an associate of the Albizzi, perhaps Niccolò da Uzzano, was posted on the doors of the palace of the Signoria. It celebrated Maso degli Albizzi's achievements in 1393, and proclaimed that he was worthy of being 'king (*re*)'. He had shown 'the good way (*la buona via*)' in entrusting the scrutiny to a *balìa* and exploiting the city's electoral mechanisms. The anonymous author, in fact, enjoined Florentines to imitate the techniques that Maso had used:

> And I say, in order to make a good *borsa*
> you should appoint your candidates in the scrutiny
> by calling a *parlamento*.[32]

In manipulating electoral mechanisms for their partisan advantage, the Albizzeschi merely perfected the repertoire of long-standing mechanisms

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[27] They were among the most influential Parte members in 1378, as listed in Stefani, 317–18: Acciaiuoli, Albizzi, Altoviti, Ardinghelli, Baroncelli, Canigiani, Castellani, Guasconi, Machiavelli, Mancini, Peruzzi, Rucellai, and Serragli.

[28] As reconstructed in Lantschner, 'Revolts and the Political Order', 19–20 n. 41, these families were the Capponi, Medici, Ricci, Salviati, and Strozzi. Also represented on the committee were the da Panzano who had been involved in the Ciompi uprising of August 1378.

[29] De Angelis, 'La classe dirigente albizzesca', 101–2; De Angelis, 'La revisione degli statuti della Parte Guelfa', 138–40.

[30] These were the Acciaiuoli (family members who qualified: 6), Albizzi (10), Altoviti (5), Biliotti (5), Castellani (5), Peruzzi (7), Ridolfi (5), Serragli (5), Strozzi (11), and Vettori (5). The results of the 1393 scrutiny are published in Ninci, 'Lo "Squittino del Mangione"', 215–48.

[31] These were the Albizzi, Altoviti, Castellani, Peruzzi, and Strozzi. For a list of those exiled in 1434, see Kent, *Rise of the Medici*, 355–7.

[32] 'E dico, per far la buona borsa, / Che voi facciate arruoti allo squittino / Col suon del parlamento alla ricorsa', 'Versi fatti da Niccolò da Uzzano', 298; translated in Kent, *Rise of the Medici*, 214.

which were at the disposal of factions and characterized confrontations between them. *Balìe* and *parlamenti* were convened both by the Ciompi coalition and their opponents in 1378 and 1382. These instruments were used again in conflicts to come. In September 1433, the oligarchical faction, emerging out of the Albizzeschi, called a *parlamento* and subsequently convened a *balìa*: the Medici and some of their allies were exiled and a new scrutiny was carried out, although previous *borse* were left untouched. When the Medici were able to return to Florence one year later, they again relied on exactly the same mechanisms of *parlamento, balìa*, exile sentences, and scrutiny, but many more Florentines ended up being exiled than on previous occasions and the discretionary powers of *accoppiatori* were drastically increased to fabricate a pro-Medici ruling class.[33] In the preceding period, the Albizzeschi themselves had continued to make use of *balìe* to strike at their opponents. After 1393, three further *balìe* were convened in November 1400, January 1401, and June 1412. Called as reactions to further alleged plots by the Alberti family, their prime aim was gradually to exclude the Alberti from political life, and the *balìe* in question did indeed end up exiling the entire family in perpetuity, while also ordering the destruction or sale of all the Alberti's houses and banning Florentines from entering into business relations with them. At the same time, these *balìe* were also used by the regime to extend its hold on the political process by strengthening the police apparatus, ordering the hiring of mercenaries for the 'security' of the city, and conferring special powers on the security committee known as the *Otto della Guardia*.[34] Alongside these measures, the Albizzeschi also sought to revive the Parte Guelfa to which they were so closely linked. The *balìa* of 1393 already restored all the controversial powers which the Parte had held before May 1378, although significantly it chose not to cancel the reforms of the *ammonizioni* which had been carried out in June and July 1378. The emerging Albizzi regime continued to be closely linked to the Parte. Between 1397 and 1434, two thirds of all *gonfalonieri della giustizia*, the highest post in the urban government, also held office as captains of the Parte.[35]

[33] Trexler, 'Il parlamento fiorentino del 1 settembre 1378'; Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus*, 266–74; Rubinstein, *Government of Florence under the Medici*, 68–87; Kent, *Rise of the Medici*, 292–6, 337–8, 346–8.
    [34] ASF, Balìe, 17, fos. 140r–147r, 155r–157v, 182r–186r; ASF, Balìe, 20, fos. 6v–20v, 31r–33v. For the provisions on the Alberti, see *Gli Alberti di Firenze*, II, 250–65, 280–93, 299–308, 320–45. Maso personally drove the police reforms in the wake of the plots: ASF, CP, 41, fos. 105v–110r. For the Albizzi's policies on policing and exile, see Zorzi, *L'amministrazione della giustizia penale*, 1–64; Baxendale, 'Exile in Practice'.
    [35] ASF, Balìe, 19, fos. 13r–14r; Finiello Zervas, *Parte Guelfa, Brunelleschi and Donatello*, 55. Further Parte reforms were carried out in the 1410s and 1420s: Pitti, 'Ricordi', 462–6; ASF, Parte Guelfa (numeri rossi), 3; ASF, Parte Guelfa (numeri rossi), 6, fos. 1r–6r, 16r–22v, 37v–48r. See also Brown, 'Guelf Party', 103–8.

The continuity of strife most clearly expressed itself in the plots which were organized by the Albizzi's rivals, who were themselves rooted in a long tradition of factional conflict. At different moments in the autumn of 1393, once each in January 1396, August 1397, and November 1400, twice in 1411, and once each in June 1412 and early 1415 a total of at least 210 Florentines were involved in plots and alleged plot attempts against the regime.[36] This included men from all reaches of Florentine society, including minor guildsmen and workers, but also implicated were individuals from a few dozen families who had held office in one of the city's three top governmental colleges in the past. Not all of these plots actually took place and some may well have been the product of the increasing paranoia of Florentine judicial authorities, but what the accounts of both judicial records and chronicles do provide us with are the lists of people who were viewed as being in a position of hostility to the regime.[37] It is certainly difficult to speak of a fully-fledged 'opposition' in the same way as one can in the context of the emergence of the Medici faction in the 1420s: most of these plots were driven by different groups that were often only connected in the loosest of ways, and in the case of some of the plotters accusations may have simply been malicious.

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[36] 1393: *Alle bocche della piazza*, 149, 159, 162–5; Minerbetti, *Cronica*, 179–80; Naddo da Montecatini, *Memorie storiche*, 140–1; Morelli, *Ricordi*, 344–5; ASF, Balìe, 19, fos. 22v–28r; *Gli Alberti di Firenze*, II, 250–65. 1396: *Alle bocche della piazza*, 185–9; Minerbetti, *Cronica*, 200–2. 1397: Minerbetti, *Cronica*, 218–19; Morelli, *Ricordi*, 372–7; ASF, Esecutore degli Ordinamenti di Giustizia, 1321, fos. 47r–48v, 55r–57v, 61r–62v, 73r–74r. 1400: *Alle bocche della piazza*, 217–23; Minerbetti, *Cronica*, 251–5; Morelli, *Ricordi*, 369–72; *Gli Alberti di Firenze*, II, 266–314; ASF, Balìe, 17, fos. 140r–147r, 182r–186r; ASF, Podestà, 3763, fos. 9r–17r, 23r–32r, 51r–58v, 73r–74v. 1411: ASF, Podestà, 4254, fos. 15r–17v; *Gli Alberti di Firenze*, II, 315–19. 1412: ASF, Signori, Legazioni e commissarie, 6, fos. 20r–21r; ASF, Corporazioni religiose soppresse dal governo francese, 78 (Badia), 324, nos. 214–17; ASF, Balìe, 20, fos. 6v–20v, 31r–33v; ASF, Podestà, 4261, fos. 32r–33v, 41r–42r, 83r–85v; *Gli Alberti di Firenze*, II, 320–45. 1415: ASF, Podestà, 4288, fos. 29r–30v; ASF, Signori, Legazioni e commissarie, 6, fos. 45r–45v. Numerous crucial judicial registers are now unavailable as a result of the damage caused by the flood of 1966, but some information on them is contained in Brucker's monograph, which also provides the best account of these plots: Brucker, *Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 90–101, 325–9, 337–40, 397–9.

[37] These families (some of which divided in their political stance) were the Acciaiuoli, Adimari-Cavicciuli, Alberti, Alderotti, Altoviti, Banchelli, Barucci, Bastari, Bencivenni, Berti, Bonafedi, Bonaccolti, Compagni, Covoni, Davizzi, Dini, Donati, Giraldi, Girolami, Gucci, Mannelli, Medici, Pagnini, Quaratesi, Ricci, Rucellai, Scali, Spini, Strozzi, Tolosini, Ubertini, Ardinghelli, Baldovinetti, Bellincioni, Davanzati, Guadagni, Mozzi, Niccoli, Rondinelli, Soderini, and Valorini. This count includes both those officially condemned and those who stood accused of involvement in plots (the latter ten). Some of these families had been, or still were, classified as magnates. I have excluded allegations against Gino Capponi, Rinaldo Gianfigliazzi, and Niccolò da Uzzano in the wake of the 1415 plot, because they only seem indirectly related to the plot itself. Membership of the Florentine governmental colleges has been established on the basis of *Florentine Renaissance Resources*.

Table 6.1 Florence: The core of anti-Albizzi families (1393–1415)[a]

Families	Involved in plots	Supporters of Ciompi revolt (1378)	Supporters of Medici (1434)
Acciaiuoli	1396, 1400	—	X
Adimari	1393, 1397, 1400	—	—
Alberti	1393, 1396, 1397, 1400, 1411, 1412	X	X
Bonafedi[b]	1400, 1415	X	—
Mannelli[c]	1397, 1400, 1411	X	—
Medici	1396, 1397, 1400	X	X
Ricci	1396, 1397, 1400	X	X
Scali	1400, 1412	X	X
Spini	1397, 1400	—	—
Strozzi	1400, 1412	X	X

[a] Listed are families of which at least one member participated in two or more plots in this period. Note that some of the families were politically divided.

[b] The Bonafedi have been included as supporters of the Ciompi revolt because they were victims of *ammonizione*.

[c] The Mannelli have been included as supporters of the Ciompi revolt because of their role in the June uprising.

Sources: For the plots, see this chapter, n. 36; for the Ciompi coalition, Lantschner, 'Revolts and the Political Order of Cities', 19–20 n. 41; for the Medici party, Kent, *Rise of the Medici*, 352–4.

Nevertheless, as Table 6.1 indicates, there was an inner core of challengers formed by ten major families with family members who were reported to have participated in two or more of these plot attempts. Only four of these families were among the forty-three top office-holding families of the 1380s and 1390s, and they clearly formed part of a distinct minority within the Florentine regime.[38] They, too, were linked to past and future conflicts. Seven of these families—most notably the Alberti, Medici, and to a lesser extent the Ricci—had also been involved in the Ciompi coalition of 1378, and six formed part of the inner core of the Medici faction when it acquired power in 1434. Among those condemned alongside these families can also be found various other collaborators associated with the Ciompi conflict, since worker- and guild-led protests took place in parallel to, or even in co-ordination with, some of these episodes of conflict. For instance, one of the rebels sentenced for involvement in the plot of November 1400 was Piero Dini, the son of Giovanni Dini who had been a member of the war

[38] These were the Acciaiuoli (9 priors), Medici (5), Spini (4), and Strozzi (4).

committee (*Otto di Guerra*) during the War of the Eight Saints, a victim of *ammonizione*, and one of the participants in the June and July uprisings of 1378. Iacopo del Bene was also condemned in November 1400, and was the son of Francesco del Bene who had become consul of the guild of dyers during the Ciompi regime and was exiled in 1382.[39] Individuals from several other families represented among the ranks of the plotters had been associated with the Medici faction before the Ciompi revolt and had seen their prospects for communal office-holding adversely affected after the 1380s.[40]

It is not entirely clear what these plots were about, but it is interesting that even their enemies did not accuse them of fomenting warfare in the city. The plotters primarily stood accused of planning the murder of the regime's key representatives: in January 1396, August 1397, November 1400, and early 1415, plotters allegedly aimed at the life of Maso degli Albizzi; in the plot of November 1400, as well as in both the conspiracies of 1411, they also wanted to kill other major exponents of the regime, such as Rinaldo Gianfigliazzi, Neri Vettori, and Gino Capponi.[41] It is perhaps no coincidence that, in those challenges which the Florentine authorities had not been able to suppress at their initial planning stages, protesters were reported as shouting 'We want to regain our state and escape from the hands of tyrants' (1393) or 'Long live the *popolo* and death to the tyrants' (1397).[42] According to the confession of Francesco Davizzi, the plan of the plot of November 1400 was to call a *parlamento* immediately after the killing of Rinaldo Gianfigliazzi, then institute a *balìa* to invalidate all previous elections, and rehabilitate those who had been exiled or *ammoniti* by the Parte Guelfa—all instruments of constitutional bargaining, which, as we have seen, were commonly used in factional conflict.[43] This suggests that the loose factional networks involved in the challenges between the 1390s and 1410s were more likely to have participated in forms of protest which

[39] *Alle bocche della piazza*, 164, 219–21; Minerbetti, *Cronica*, 182, 253–4; *Diario*, 353, 366, 368; *Tumulto*, 55 (Nofri); Stefani, 293. See also Hoshino, 'Francesco di Iacopo del Bene'.

[40] Such as the Alderotti, Barucci, Bastari, Covoni, Giraldi, Gucci, and Mozzi families. For these connections, see *Diario*, 347–8, 353, 356, 361; Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society*, 192, 330, 334–5, 342, 348, 350, 361–2, 363, 364; *Tumulto*, 23 (Acciaioli).

[41] *Alle bocche della piazza*, 164–5, 185, 217–21; Minerbetti, *Cronica*, 218–19, 251–4; Morelli, *Ricordi*, 372–7; *Gli Alberti di Firenze*, II, 266–71; ASF, Podestà, 4254, fos. 15r–17r; ASF, Podestà, 4288, fos. 45r–45v; ASF, Corporazioni religiose soppresse dal governo francese, 78 (Badia), 324, nos. 214–17; Brucker, *Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 325–7.

[42] 'Vogliamo raquistare ogi lo stato nostro e uscire delle mani de' tiranni', *Alle bocche della piazza*, 165; 'Viva il popolo e moiano i tiranni', Minerbetti, *Cronica*, 219.

[43] *Gli Alberti di Firenze*, II, 266–71.

aimed at eliminating the worst representatives of the regime and made use of the existing tools of factional conflict, but were not interested in urban warfare in the manner of the coalitions which were typical of cities such as Bologna or Liège. In fact, the supposed plot of August 1397 had involved little more than a band of eight participants who had clandestinely entered Florence from Bologna to kill Maso degli Albizzi. Having been informed by their spies that they could find him on the square before San Piero Maggiore, they were soon disappointed and, after being chased onto the roof of a church, were eventually arrested by their opponents.[44]

The Pluralistic Framework of Communal Institutions

The relative durability of factional structures and their access to constitutional mechanisms was connected to the life-span of the institutions which constituted the formal apparatus of the commune. Florence not only possessed a Signoria and its two advisory colleges, but was also characterized by a number of permanent councils, magistracies, and consultative assemblies, all of which, one way or another, belonged to its political apparatus and could, in their sheer wealth and complexity, scarcely be matched by other Italian cities (except Venice). Not all of these represented especially effective channels for the negotiation of conflict, but they nevertheless provided opportunities to re-direct, slow down, or alter political processes within the communal framework.

Two little-studied examples are the *Consiglio del Popolo* and the *Consiglio del Comune*. Composed of about three hundred and two hundred members respectively, these councils had to agree, by a two-thirds majority, to all legislation which was proposed to them by the Signoria. Although the procedures and membership of the councils were tightly controlled by the Signoria and its advisory colleges, they were not always easy to deal with and represented one of the possible channels through which opposition could be voiced in the city.[45] As it was only possible to vote on, but not publicly to speak against, proposals during meetings, it is notoriously difficult to reconstruct what went on inside these councils. Some insights can, however, be gained from studying a variety of different sources associated with a particular episode of conflict on which I will focus in this section. Between August 1416 and November 1420, the Signoria was defeated seventy-two times in the councils over a contentious political issue: a new

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[44] For this plot, see this chapter, n. 36.
[45] On the regulations concerning councils, see Tanzini, *Il governo delle leggi*, 18–95; Tanzini, *Statuti e legislazione*, 122–35; Guidi, *Il governo della città-repubblica di Firenze*, II, 133–49.

Table 6.2 Florence: Number of defeated scrutiny proposals in legislative councils (1416–1420)

	Consiglio del Popolo	*Consiglio del Comune*
August 1416	4	—
October 1416	7	5
December 1416–January 1417	4	4
March 1417–April 1417	3	2
September 1418	5	5
October 1418	3	2
January 1419	4	—
March–April 1419	3	3
January–February 1420	7	—
April–May 1420	4	—
June–August 1420	5	—
November 1420	2	—
total number of defeats	51	21

Sources: ASF, Libri fabarum, 51, fos. 86v–89r, 98r–104v, 116r, 125r–130v, 136r–139r, 173r–176v, 216v–226v, 246r–248v, 260r–264r; ASF, Libri fabarum, 52, fos. 21r–25r, 35r–39r, 47v–73r.

scrutiny for offices in the Florentine territorial state. The pattern of these votes is documented in Table 6.2. The bulk (51) of the defeats came in the *Consiglio del Popolo*, because measures rejected in this first council did not proceed to the *Consiglio del Comune*. However, when the *Consiglio del Popolo* had approved the scrutiny measures, the *Consiglio del Comune* still defeated them twenty-one times.

Only twice in these years did the councils, in fact, agree to proposed new scrutinies. In October 1417, a new scrutiny for offices in the Florentine territorial state was approved and carried out soon thereafter. In November 1420, after much pressure, the councils again approved a new scrutiny for offices in the city (excepting offices on the three governmental colleges) and the territorial state: after long debates on what to do with the individuals successful in that scrutiny, the councils eventually agreed to a measure whereby no special *borsa* was to be created for them, but that their name tickets would be inserted in the *borse* of previous scrutinies.[46]

With both the Signoria and councils changing their membership every two to four months, the exact fault-lines of these confrontations are difficult to reconstruct in any straightforward way, but it is likely that at their

[46] ASF, Provvisioni, Registri, 107, fos. 212r–214v, 215v–216r, 217r–218r, 226v–227r, 230r–231r, 242r (12–20 October 1417); ASF, Provvisioni, Registri, 110, fos. 177r–186v (20–25 November 1420). These episodes have also been studied in Brucker, *Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 413–16; Martines, *Lawyers and Statecraft*, 208–9.

origins lay the attempt by existing members of the regime to strengthen their grip on the political personnel chosen through scrutinies. In fourteen advisory meetings of specially summoned Florentine citizens (*pratiche*) convened to discuss this impasse between September 1416 and November 1420, only seven families, including the Albizzi, were represented on more than ten occasions and were likely to have formed the inner core of the grouping behind the scrutiny reforms.[47] Operating through a manipulation of electoral procedures was indeed, as we have seen, one of the hallmarks of Albizzi policy. The offices of the Florentine territorial state, which had expanded greatly under the aegis of the Albizzi faction, were lucrative and also lay in geo-politically sensitive areas, making it imperative that their staffing was not left to chance.[48] The members of the *pratiche* complained that such offices had increasingly fallen to men from lower ranks of society and even the scrutiny of 1417 was criticized for having left many meritorious Florentine citizens unrewarded.[49]

It is not easy to tell from the records who the opponents of these policies were, but the most likely group were relative outsiders of the regime who could use the legislative councils as a platform. The majority of the councils' members did not usually come from the top-office holding families: of about a thousand different individuals represented in the councils over three sample periods, only around one tenth were ever represented in the highly restricted *pratiche* meetings on this subject. Not all were necessarily straightforward opponents of the regime, but at least some were: for instance, all the families which belonged to the inner core of the anti-Albizzi plotters were represented on the legislative councils during this period.[50] Why such families should have blocked attempts to gain greater control over their possibilities for office-holding is understandable. After all, the holding of new scrutinies required the suspension of recent legislation, which prohibited new laws concerning scrutinies without authorization of the councils. The resistance of the councils also fitted

[47] They were the Albizzi, Biliotti, della Casa, Castellani, Davanzati, Ridolfi, and Strozzi. I have counted those *pratiche* meetings which involved *richiesti* and dealt with the scrutiny between September 1416 and November 1420 (no records between 1418 and 1420): ASF, CP, 43, fos. 100v–102r, 107v–109r, 116v–117v, 127r–128v, 145r–146r; ASF, CP, 44, fos. 10r–11r, 15v–17r, 18v, 42v–45v.

[48] Zorzi, ' "Material Constitution" of the Florentine Dominion', 16–17.

[49] ASF, CP, 44, fos. 10r–11r, 15v–17r. Note that in 1416–17 there had also been divisions within this in-group: ASF, CP, 43, esp. fos. 100v–102r, 107v–109r. The results of the scrutiny of 1417 do not survive, but office-holders drawn from its pool of candidates can be found in ASF, Tratte, 984.

[50] The three sample periods of September 1416–January 1417, September 1417–January 1418, and September 1418–Janunary 1419 have been chosen because these are the only years for which comparison with surviving *pratiche* records is possible: ASF, Tratte, 685, fos. 78v–86v, 117r–126r, 154r–162r.

into a larger pattern of resistance to other scrutinies: between 1400 and 1404, the councils had already obstructed a scrutiny and in 1422 they were to do so again.[51] The regime even attempted to talk some of their opponents into agreement by, unusually, inviting them to *pratiche*, over which the Signoria was able to exercise more direct control. On at least four occasions—on 29 January 1417, 5 April 1417, 19 July 1420, and 11 November 1420—especially large *pratiche* were convened to discuss opposition to the scrutiny: while *pratiche* were usually composed of seasoned political operators, on these specific occasions between twenty-five and fifty-eight per cent of the speakers came from families which were only summoned once or twice on this matter.[52] This included members of the legislative councils themselves: on 29 January, as many as seventeen members came from, mostly less powerful, families who also happened to sit on one of the two legislative councils in this period. This even included the extremely unusual presence in such a close-knit group of Antonio degli Alberti, the head of the only Alberti branch still allowed to stay in Florence. The regime, obviously, hoped to do what it could to placate the opposition, but in general this had little effect.[53]

The Albizzi were well aware that the Florentine constitution could be exploited by all sorts of political groups. It is not surprising, then, that coups like that of 1393 were mainly designed to strengthen the possibilities of control over the communal apparatus through a variety of jurisdictional measures, which were also aimed at undermining the *Consiglio del Popolo* and the *Consiglio del Comune*. During *parlamenti* and *balìe* the legislative powers of councils were basically suspended. Between 1393 and 1404, a quasi-council of eighty-one members (known, also under the name *balìa*, as the *Ottantuno*) was charged with overseeing fiscal and military policy, thereby creating jurisdictional conflicts with the legislative councils which the *Ottantuno* could, at least in theory, sidestep.[54] In 1411, an entire new legislative council of 200 members (the *Consiglio dei Duecento*) was created alongside the other two councils.[55] It is not always clear whether a

[51] The legislation in question is explained in ASF, Provisioni Registri, 110, fos. 177r–181v. On 1400–4, Ninci, 'Lo "Squittino del Mangione"'. On 1422, ASF, Libri fabarum, 52, fos. 158v–161r, 175r–177r, 187v–190r.

[52] ASF, CP, 43, fos. 127r–128v (29 January 1417: 58% of 62 participants), 145r–146r (5 April 1417: 38% of 34 participants); ASF, CP, 44, fos. 18v (25% of 44 participants), 44r (42% of 31 participants).

[53] These individuals were Antonio Alberti, Benino del Benino, Francesco Corsi, Cresci Cresci, Giovanni Falconi, Leonardo Fantoni, Astorre Gherardini, Giovanni Guicciardini, Piero Lotti, Niccolò Malegonelle, Piero Marchi, Ugolino Marignolli, Leonardo Pagnini, Filippo Pecori, Vieri Riccialbani, Zenobio Rossi, and Iacopo Vecchietti.

[54] Molho, 'Florentine Oligarchy and the Balìe', 31–2, 41–9.

[55] Fubini, 'Dalla rappresentanza sociale alla rappresentanza politica', 293–301.

coherent Albizzi faction operated on all these occasions, but an effective example of Albizzi power was the *Dieci di Libertà*, an annually renewed committee with special powers in fiscal and military matters, which, after the coup of 1393, was also no longer appointed through ordinary legislative procedures, but through the *Ottantuno.* Nineteen families controlled forty per cent of all available *Dieci* posts between 1384 and 1414, and as many as fifteen of them had already been represented on the crucial scrutiny committee of 1393.[56]

The most ambitious project of the Albizzi, who were clearly eager to streamline political procedures, was that of redacting new statutes for Florence. Following unsuccessful attempts in the early days of Albizzi dominance in 1394 and 1396, the Signoria finally handed this task to a committee, which drew up new statutes between 1408 and 1409. This clearly was an Albizzi project, because, as Lorenzo Tanzini has shown, eight of its ten members had also held office on the tightly controlled *Dieci di Libertà* in the previous two decades. Among a variety of other reforms, the newly drafted statutes—controversially, but not surprisingly—also involved a stricter regulation of the city's recalcitrant legislative councils and omitted crucial safeguards which the councils had received in previous decades. The statutes, perhaps because of wider political resistance to this ambitious project, remained incomplete until 1415 when, after a process of revision and amendment, they were finally approved by the councils themselves.[57] However, resistance in the councils continued and, testimony to their powers, the councils were also able to use the available constitutional mechanisms to create further barriers against the project of statutory reform. In July 1416 the councils successfully suspended, initially on a temporary basis, the statutes' paragraphs on conciliar powers. This was followed, in February 1417—in the middle of the crisis over the scrutiny—by the councils' suspension of the entire Florentine statutes for six months, and by the complete revocation of all provisions concerning the legislative councils. Only one week later, the sections of the statutes concerning internal and external offices were also abrogated. The Florentine communal framework had, once again, offered a site to play

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[56] The families in question were the Agli, Cavalcanti, Corbinelli, Giunti, Ardinghelli, Arnolfi, Arrighi, Baroncelli, Castellani, Gianfigliazzi, Guasconi, Minerbetti, Ridolfi, Rucellai, Spini, Strozzi, della Stufa, da Uzzano, and Valori. The latter fifteen had all been on the 1393 scrutiny committee. The data are published in *Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, XIV, 286–97.

[57] *Statuta Populi et Communis Florentie*, II, 659–79. For a detailed analysis, see Tanzini, *Statuti e legislazione*, 19–30, 50–6, 199–310.

out the city's factious politics, but had weathered the threat of complete domination by the Albizzeschi.[58]

In spite of attempts from all sides to manipulate it, the Florentine commune's political apparatus endured remarkably well. Like factions, which were similarly lasting political units, the commune's plurality of institutions generated a relatively stable framework within which city dwellers felt encouraged to pursue conflicts through constitutional bargaining and acts of protest that did not generally end in urban warfare. In the decades to come, the Medici themselves operated through this system of conflict. In ways that continued, but radicalized Albizzi policies, the Medici not only eliminated their political rivals and furthered their own partisans through more or less the same instruments of constitutional bargaining, but also continued the Albizzeschi's assault on the *Consiglio del Popolo* and the *Consiglio del Comune* alongside which they created various temporary or permanent special councils.[59] The Medici's relationship with the councils, however, demonstrates that they were also ultimately keener on changing Florence's system of conflict than the Albizzeschi ever had or could have been. This became most evident in the summer of 1458 when the *Consiglio del Popolo* rejected proposals of a scrutiny in votes held every day between 24 July and 1 August. Initially, the Medici's policies resembled earlier tactics. In a first attempt to coerce the councillors to agree, the regime introduced open balloting, which even prompted the intervention of Archbishop Antonino of Florence against this un-constitutional practice. A *parlamento* was eventually called on 11 August to sidestep the councils and approve much further-reaching measures. At this point, a new stage in the city's political convulsions had already begun: the Piazza della Signoria, where the *parlamento* took place, was surrounded by mercenary troops called in by Cosimo de' Medici himself, opposition leaders were arrested and more than 150 citizens were placed under house arrest. The Medici had shown that they could deal with recalcitrant councils. For the remaining years of the Medici regime, the power and influence of councils was marginalized and the Florentine system of conflict lost one of its important nodal points.[60]

[58] ASF, Provisioni Registri, 106, fos. 302r–307r. The first provision passed the *Consiglio del Popolo* and the *Consiglio del Comune* on 11–12 February 1417 with majorities of 169:77 and 178:35 votes. The second provision passed on 19–20 February 1417 by 210:76 and 167:40 votes. See also Tanzini, *Statuti e legislazione*, 221–3.

[59] Rubinstein, *Government of Florence under the Medici*, 68–87, 211–12.

[60] The *parlamento* decided, among other measures, to delegate powers for holding a new scrutiny and creating a new permanent council (the *Cento*, as it turned out) to a short-term *balìa*: Rubinstein, *Government of Florence under the Medici*, 109–37; Clarke, *Soderini and the Medici*, 59–64.

TOURNAI

Bargaining through Parishes

Tournai's political system saw no long-term factions or parties which were comparable to those of Florence. Like other cities, Tournai witnessed a long-standing contest between patricians and guildsmen, but it is telling that—unlike the followers of the Parte Guelfa in Florence—the patricians of Tournai represented no compact group in the political crises of 1365 and 1423. On both occasions, the patriciate split and sizable groups of patricians ended up supporting the guild-led movements.[61] The story of Tournai's guilds was also more turbulent than that of their Florentine counterparts. In the fourteenth century, guilds were incorporated into the urban government following revolts in 1307 and 1365, but these experiments only lasted twenty-five and two years respectively. After the revolt of 1423, guilds did finally come to constitute the fourth college of municipal administration—a system which, with some variations, stayed in place until it was ended by Emperor Charles V in 1521. There were no further guild revolts after the turbulent 1420s, but the incorporation of guilds did not remove conflicts or divisions between patricians and guildsmen. The 1450s saw a major crisis, while the guilds continued to use violent protests as a political instrument alongside their involvement in constitutional mechanisms.[62]

There was, however, one corporate unit which represented a more long-term structure in Tournai's political system. Parishes had been institutionalized in the city's political process since the late twelfth century, and represented crucial jurisdictional bases around which various action groups could organize. Such groups were arguably less cohesive than those rallying around factions, but the longevity of Tournai's parish system meant that conflicts were, initially at least, channelled through the constitutional mechanisms to which parishes were tied. Tournai's parishes were, in fact, incorporated into the formal political process in ways quite unlike that of other cities of the Southern Low Countries. Even in Liège, with its highly politicized ecclesiastical apparatus, the city's twenty-five or twenty-six parishes played no established role in the city's governance, while in Ghent five parishes were only indirectly

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[61] See this chapter, p. 158, and Lantschner, 'Revolts and the Political Order of Cities'.
[62] Verriest, *Les luttes sociales*, 1–27; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 205–20 and passim; Hocquet, *Tournai et le Tournaisis*, 54–68. For continuing guild riots, see, for instance, *Chronique*, 472–3, 523–5.

Table 6.3 Tournai: The role of parishes in the political process

Parish	Diocese	*Eswardeurs* elected per parish	Representatives in *Assemblée des Trois-Cents*[a]	Parish represented in *Assemblée de la Communauté*[a]
Notre-Dame	Tournai	6	60	X
Saint-Piat	Tournai	6	50	X
Saint-Quentin	Tournai	5	50	X
Saint-Jacques	Tournai	4	60	X
Saint-Pierre	Tournai	2	30[b]	X
Saint-Nicaise	Tournai	—	—	X
Sainte-Marie-Madeleine	Tournai	—	—	X
Sainte-Marguerite	Tournai	—	—	X
Saint-Brice	Cambrai	5	50	X
Saint-Nicolas	Cambrai	2	30[c]	X
Sainte-Catherine	Tournai	—	—	X
Saint-Jean-Baptiste	Cambrai	—	—	X

[a] Until 1423.
[b] Jointly with Saint-Nicolas.
[c] Jointly with Saint-Pierre.
Source: Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 24, 29.

involved in the election of the dean of the weavers' guild and were not directly part of the urban political apparatus.[63] The parishes of Tournai, by contrast, were crucial constituent institutions of urban political organization (Table 6.3).

First mentioned as institutional bodies when Tournai received its royal charter in 1187, by our period parishes—composed of the heads of household of the parish, who also held citizenship—chose a specifically allotted number of representatives in the municipal college of *eswardeurs* who, in turn, elected the two other municipal colleges of the *jurés* and the échevins. The parishes were also the constituent bodies of two representative assemblies, which were consulted by the urban government on questions of financial or foreign policy: the *Assemblée des Trois-Cents*, created in 1373, which was composed by representatives of seven parishes, and the long-standing *Assemblée de la Communauté*, in which all twelve parishes of the city were represented. In each of these assemblies voting was by parishes and for motions to be won, a majority of parishes needed to agree to a measure. After the guild revolt of 1423, paradoxically—as we shall

[63] Lahaye, 'Les paroisses de Liège'; Boone, *Gent en de Bourgondische hertogen*, 59–71, 93–105.

see—sustained by some parishes, the *Assemblée des Trois-Cents* was abol-
ished, while the *Assemblée de la Communauté* was convened on a guild, and
not a parish-basis. The parishes, however, retained their important role in
the election of the *eswardeurs*.[64]

This conception of the city of Tournai as a 'federation' of parishes may
have owed something to the unusual jurisdictional partition of parishes in
Tournai in terms of diocesan boundaries: while most parishes belonged
to the diocese of Tournai, the three on the right bank of the river Scheldt
(Saint-Brice, Saint-Nicolas, and Saint-Jean-Baptiste) were subordinated
to the bishop of Cambrai. This was also reflected in the composition of the
municipal college of échevins, which, since 1187, allotted a specific share
of seats to representatives from the Cambrai-governed parts of the city,
and was formed by seven échevins representing Tournai and seven repre-
senting the Cambrai-governed parish of Saint-Brice.[65] In the same way in
which the political decisions of parishes affected the urban government,
the latter was in turn involved in parish life. It appears from the surviving
accounts of two parishes that the urban government ratified the election
of parish officials, and jointly audited parish accounts together with par-
ish officials and parishioners. Parishes as religious units were also directly
involved in other manifestations of civic life: they took part in the city's
famous procession on 14 September, and the parish of Sainte-Marguerite
regularly paid the expenses of a group to take part in the annual *puy* (poetry
competition) of the parish of Saint-Jacques. This differed from Lille, where
parishes played no such established role. For instance, groups participat-
ing in Lille's major annual procession were organized on a neighbourhood
basis which was not directly related to the city's division into parishes.[66]

Given the central role of parishes in the political process, they developed
their own mechanisms for the negotiations of conflicts within Tournai,
as well as between the city and external powers. One area of conflict in
which parishes played an important role through the city's two assem-
blies was monetary policy—always a contentious issue in late medieval
European cities, which, incidentally, was among the grievances voiced by
the Ciompi in 1378 and also resurfaced as one of the concerns raised in
the Tournai revolt of 1423. Tournai had been hit particularly hard by the

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[64] *Ordonnances des roys de France*, XI, 248–51; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 23–6, 28–30, 211–13; Dumoulin, 'Les églises paroissiales de Tournai', 260–4.
[65] D'Herbomez, 'Philippe le Bel et les Tournaisiens', 22–42; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 26.
[66] *L'église Saint-Brice à Tournai*, esp. 121, 126–7, 139–40, 157, 163–4; 'Comptes de la paroisse Sainte-Marguerite', 289, 291, 293, 297, 299, 301, 303, 305. For the *puy* of Saint-Jacques, *Croniques*, 185–6. For Lille, see Chapter 7, pp. 180–2.

crown's continual debasement of the currency because the city was, as a result of its geographical position, exposed to the strong Flemish *groot*. On the one hand, this situation brought the city into conflict with the king of France, who, from 1418, possibly under the influence of the duke of Burgundy, constrained the mint of Tournai to strike the debased currency. On the other hand, these circumstances also created conflict within the city, partly reinforced by long-standing divisions in Tournai: it divided Burgundians and Armagnacs, who advocated different foreign policy orientations for the city, but it also reignited socio-political divisions because less wealthy city dwellers stood to lose from the increasingly expensive imports of foodstuffs from Flanders.[67] This turned parishes into crucial venues for the negotiation of the city's response to royal monetary policy.

    After a series of consultations between the city and the king, the urban government consulted the *Assemblée de la Communauté* in September 1420 on petitioning the king to strike a stronger currency, but opinion was divided: the parish of Notre-Dame advised asking royal ambassadors for approval, Saint-Quentin and Saint-Pierre proposed to follow royal policy, and Saint-Brice was non-committal. In this instance, the urban government nevertheless continued negotiations and, later in the year, the king restored the older coinage in return for payment of a subsidy the precise sum of which was re-negotiated three times.[68] However, parishes could also successfully block initiatives by the urban government, and this possibility undoubtedly turned them into attractive venues for political groups to advance their objectives. In early 1421, the urban government opened negotiations with the duke of Burgundy, who remained influential at court in Paris, for a concession to strike a coinage at the same level as the Flemish currency. This measure—which would have hit merchants dependent on selling their products cheaply in Flanders—was opposed by an assembly of patricians, and, although the negotiations with the duke had been successful, the urban government decided not to publish the result of their negotiations in order to avoid conflict in the city. The parishes, this time convened on the basis of the *Assemblée des Trois-Cents*, expressed themselves negatively on another debasement of the currency, ordered by the king in November 1421, upon which the urban government asked the royal *bailli* to defer execution of the royal order and again

[67] Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 127–37. For the problematic relationship of the Tournai mint with Flanders, leading eventually to the depletion of the Flemish currency, see Spufford, *Monetary Problems and Policies*, 89–95; see Blockmans, 'La participation des sujets flamands' for public pressure on the monetary policies of the dukes of Burgundy.

[68] *Ordonnances des roys de France*, X, 508; *TR*, I, 180, 193–6, 201, 204, 207–8, 213–16, 220; *Chronique*, 370; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 472–5.

entered into negotiations with the duke of Burgundy.[69] Parishes were, therefore, important sites for the negotiation of policy both within the city and vis-à-vis external players. Early in 1419, when Tournai was asked to contribute 200 troops to the king's war effort at Rouen, care was taken to assemble the parishes on three separate days. In the autumn of 1420, parishes came out in the *Assemblée de la Communauté* against Tournai's commitment to the Treaty of Troyes which sealed the union of England and France under the aegis of the duke of Burgundy.[70]

It is striking that, in spite of the tense political and economic situation of the 1410s, Tournai did not experience major escalations of conflict, and much of this may well be related to the prevailing tendency to deflect disagreements into parishes, and to use these as testing grounds to develop policies. Between 1365 and 1371, when Tournai was ruled by governors appointed by the French king, these also turned to parishes at moments of particular tension. After an uprising on 2 February 1365, the governor's first measure was to assemble parishes on 4 February to bring forward the election of the *eswardeurs*. When two years later, in February 1367, the king abolished the entire urban administration of Tournai, a newly-appointed governor nevertheless assembled parishes on an informal basis to elect thirty-four councillors who were to rule the city instead of the colleges of the échevins, *jurés*, and *eswardeurs*. Three years later parishes decided—successfully, as it turned out—to petition the king for the re-establishment of municipal institutions along the lines of an earlier charter which had also been revised by a commission of two representatives per parish.[71]

While parishes were thus integrated into an internal and external process of constitutional manipulation, their very power also made them important players in situations of revolt. A trigger of the revolt of 1423 was the refusal of Saint-Brice, Saint-Nicolas, and Saint-Jean-Baptiste (all on the right bank of the river Scheldt), at a meeting of the *Assemblée de la Communauté* on 2 June, to agree to a treaty with Burgundy. As these parishes saw it, this treaty would have been prejudicial to Tournai's traditional loyalty to the king of France, because it would have guaranteed security payments to Burgundy and committed Tournai not to support Burgundy's enemies. Three days later, representatives of the three parishes petitioned

[69]   *TR*, I, 222–4, 227, 240–2, 244.
[70]   *TR*, I, 173–4, 181–91. For the Treaty of Troyes, see Chapter 1, p. 27.
[71]   *Chronique*, 211–12, 240, 247–8, 250–1; *Croniques*, 138, 156–7, 171, 173, 180–1, 184; *Ordonnances des roys de France*, V, 370–9. Note that the role of parishes had also been confirmed in previous political convulsions in 1333 and 1340: *Ordonnances des roys de France*, XII, 18–23, 54–8; d'Herbomez, 'Les constitutions de Tournai'.

the urban government to send ambassadors to Charles VII to enquire whether he agreed with the treaty, and Saint-Brice even offered to despatch this embassy at the parish's own expense. The request was denied, and by 9 June an insurgent coalition, composed of guildsmen and anti-Burgundian patricians from across the city, overthrew the urban government.[72]

Not only did parishes stimulate this process, but the parish of Saint-Brice, inhabited by a majority of men working in the textile industry, played a particularly direct role as a mobilizing basis for insurgents. According to one chronicler, after their resistance to the treaty with Burgundy, the parishioners of Saint-Brice convinced many members of other parishes that they had been betrayed, and on 9 June an armed band from Saint-Brice joined a group of men led by the second *prévôt*, Caron de Traielles, in occupying the city.[73] An important meeting place for the rebels may have been Saint-Brice's place du Bécquerel, at which demonstrations and occupations by guildsmen were to take place in September 1424, July 1425, and August 1428. Saint-Brice was also the location of the palace of Guilard de Moy, the agent of Charles VII, who stood accused of instigating fullers and weavers to revolt.[74] The activities of the Saint-Brice men may also have been partly aimed at an elite within the parish, because one of the revolt's primary victims was the parish's most prominent family: between them, the brothers Jean and Simon de Saint-Genois had held thirty major municipal offices between 1377 and 1423, and, as pro-Burgundians, they were effectively forced to leave the city between 1423 and 1425.[75] Although parishes usually encouraged the negotiation of conflicts through constitutional mechanisms, the events of the mid-1420s illustrate how formidable they could be as the bases for action groups in situations of crisis. The parish of Saint-Brice, incidentally, had already been viewed suspiciously in previous decades for its religious activities. Its parish priest, Pierre Duquesne, had been accused of blasphemy by the bishop of Cambrai in 1396. Furthermore, in an ordinance of June 1408 the urban government expressed its concerns about the possibly unorthodox character of religious plays performed in Saint-Brice, ordering that only those plays which exclusively featured stories and figures from the Bible without any embellishment were allowed.[76]

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[72] *Chronique*, 378–81; *Croniques*, 348; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 180–94; *TR*, II, 41–4.

[73] *Chronique*, 380.

[74] *Chronique*, 390–1, 393, 400–1; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 188–9.

[75] *Chronique*, 374; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 226, 373, 416–17; *Notices généalogiques tournaisiennes*, III, 421–3.

[76] *TR*, I, 33–4, 68.

The Pluralistic Framework of Government

As in Florence, a multiplicity of constitutional mechanisms provided further channels for bargaining between contending political groups. Some of these mechanisms were located in the city itself, but—unlike in Florence—many had developed around external political institutions. These included not only the crown of France, but also the *Parlement*, various royal commissions, the duke of Burgundy, the city's governor, and the *bailli*, as well as Tournai's powerful bishop and the city's monasteries. One way or the other, most political conflicts in the city were at least in part addressed through these channels. After all, because of Tournai's relatively extensive political autonomy, city dwellers had ample opportunities to manipulate such constitutional mechanisms and to negotiate their conflicts through them.

Two major episodes of conflict will illustrate how this system worked in practice before I turn to explaining the reasons for the relative stability of this framework as well as its sensational breakdown in the 1420s. Although nearly one hundred years separated these two episodes, in both the concerns of guildsmen about governance quickly turned into major confrontations about the city's political organization which involved high levels of bargaining across several jurisdictional layers. In February 1365, following a budgetary crisis and the introduction of new taxes, a coalition of insurgents attacked the houses of the city's office-holders and occupied the central square, and in the following days elected a new urban government, re-established the city's guilds, imprisoned fourteen members of the previous urban government, and banished another 150 former office-holders. Although the coalition was initially sustained by artisans who were excluded from urban government, it was later reinforced by patricians and the city's governor.[77] Nearly a century later, in July 1451, guildsmen—who had, by now, acquired permanent representation on the city's urban government—again accused the city's ruling elite of mismanagement in the wake of a budgetary crisis. The *Assemblée de la Communauté*, since 1423 convened on the basis of guilds, set up a committee known as the seventy-two *commis*, which was charged with investigating abuses of power and ended up claiming judicial authority for itself. Violent protests led to the arrest and imprisonment of urban officials, while many patricians—including the city's two *prévôts*—fled the city, prompting extraordinary elections for their positions. This crisis proved less dramatic than that of 1365, but its consequences were negotiated for more than two years.[78]

[77] *Chronique*, 205–11; *Croniques*, 133–8.
[78] *Chronique*, 471–525; *TR*, III, 154–202.

In both cases, the opposing sides quickly pursued their claims through internal constitutional mechanisms, but most crucially also involved political agencies which were external to the city. Following the outbreak of violence on 2 February 1365, the governor of Tournai, Oudart de Renty, reacted quickly. Having been appointed by a royal commission in late 1364, Oudart first went into hiding in the cathedral, but in a volte-face he soon made an arrangement with the insurgents. On 4 February, he convened the parishes to elect a new urban government, and one day later established a guild regime by ordering the election of two representatives per guild and creating an urban political system on the basis of guilds. Soon, the contending parties involved external agencies in the conflict. On 7 February 1365, Tournai's new urban government despatched three ambassadors to Paris—later provided with 400 *francs* of bribes that were hastily collected in the city—to receive an abolition of the new taxes in question, a general pardon, royal confirmation for the new guilds, and re-affirmation of the privileges Tournai had enjoyed under its governor Pierre de Marlière in the 1330s. At the same time, the imprisoned office-holders themselves appealed to the *Parlement* of Paris to be freed.[79] The instrument chosen in the crisis of 1451 was also initially an internal constitutional mechanism. *Commis* had already been elected in the wake of the last guild revolt of August 1428, when they had been put in charge of a variety of institutional and financial reforms, but were also responsible for the arrest and execution of dozens of political enemies. The commission of 1451 expressly stated that the *commis* were to hold the same powers as their counterparts of 1428, but this was particularly contested by the patrician-controlled college of the *jurés* the judicial power of which the *commis* threatened to undermine. Both sides soon sought the favourable intervention of the crown. Four of the estranged office-holders made a formal complaint before the king. The *commis*, by contrast, dispatched delegates to receive royal confirmation for the report of abuses which they had drawn up and demanded more powers for themselves.[80] However, in both 1365 and 1451, appeals to the crown were only to an extent about seeking, let alone accepting, royal arbitration. Rather, they were ways of setting in motion a complicated framework of bargaining between the contending parties and a variety of other institutions.

In 1365, negotiations in Paris were inconclusive. In March 1365, the king agreed to bestow a pardon on the insurgents and granted the requested privileges, but refused to confirm the powers of the guilds. This

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[79] *Chronique*, 209–15, 218; *Croniques*, 138.
[80] *Chronique*, 471–4; *TR*, III, 154–6, 164–70. For 1428, see Chapter 2, pp. 50–1.

prompted Tournai's governor, on 18 March, to issue letters under his own seal which provided for the election of two representatives per guild as his personal advisers. However, the king's intervention left the status of the city's former office-holders unclear, and this soon became the major subject of contention over the following months. In May, the city was forced to hand over the prisoners to the *Parlement* of Paris, but the governor and urban government of Tournai dispatched a delegation to the king to resist this ordinance and ordered a tax of one *gros* on each household to finance their mission. Eventually, Tournai's delegates found themselves before the king in a confrontation with their rivals at which they accused them of having badly governed the city, pocketed public money, and delivered many unfair sentences. In a compromise solution, the king released the prisoners on bail, but delegated the actual decision on this case to a royal commission.[81] The royal commissioners—the abbot of Cluny, the university master Jacques Lavache, and Gilles de Sourcourt—arrived in Tournai in July 1365, where they sought to involve the rival parties in a variety of committees and assemblies to resolve the conflict. A commission of twelve representatives of the city—half of whom came from the ranks of the guilds—was appointed to work with the commissioners, and at various points in the following months the commissioners consulted with parish and guild assemblies, as well as individual citizens. By 18 September 1365, a compromise was reached and agreed by a guild assembly, according to which the prisoners were allowed to return to Tournai, but were perpetually excluded from office and ordered to pay a fine of 18,000 *livres* towards urban finances. Perhaps owing to the robustness of these consultative mechanisms, an attempted riot of a group of weavers, fullers, tailors, and blacksmiths on 17 September was unsuccessful in attracting wider support, and swiftly ended with the banishment of several participants, as well as the execution of one insurgent who had sought to mobilize the guildsmen by ringing the bells of the belfry. By 4 November, the king and his council essentially confirmed the compromise, charging the bishop and the governor of Tournai to execute the sentence. The arbitration of the commissioners appears to have been successful, because for the following months no further confrontations over the issue of the prisoners were reported.[82]

The willingness of the French king Charles V to accept experiments such as that of 1365 was limited. In February 1367, the king again

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[81] *Chronique*, 215–21; *Croniques*, 131–5, 148–9. The king did, however, issue privileges for the weavers in July 1365, but these were revoked a year later: *Ordonnances des roys de France*, IV, 588–9, 648–53.

[82] *Chronique*, 221–34; *Croniques*, 143–7, 150.

suppressed Tournai's urban government, together with the charter which he had bestowed on the city two years earlier. The king's policy had almost certainly been driven by demands from Tournai's former office-holders who had suffered under the new regime: when the city's new governor, Enguerrand d'Eudin, established himself there later that month, he read-mitted those who had been imprisoned in 1365, and suppressed the guild organizations which had been the driving forces of the whole conflict.[83] In 1451, King Charles VII was even less willing to listen to the demands of guildsmen. Upon hearing the complaints about the radical policies of the *commis*, Charles dispatched Henri de Marle, president of the *Parlement*, to Tournai. In December 1451, Henri suspended the *commis* and freed the prisoners. Nevertheless, in a separate ordinance rendered public in February 1452, Charles permitted that a sub-committee of the *commis*, composed of no more than thirty-six men, could draw up a list of complaints for submission to a royal commission which would come to Tournai.[84] Again, the work lay with a commission, this time composed by the procurator general Jean Damet, the seneschal of Poitou Louis de Beaumont, and the king's *maître des requêtes* Guy Bernard. Unlike their predecessors of 1365, however, the royal commissioners did not apparently engage in consul-tations with various corporate groups and assemblies in the city. After three months of investigations, they instead published a harsh verdict in September 1452: not only were all the acts of the *commis* annulled, but guild powers were drastically curtailed. City-wide guild assemblies were abolished, while guild banners were confiscated. Legislative measures now only required the consent of three of the four colleges of municipal admin-istration, thereby depriving the guilds of their previous influence through the college of guild representatives.[85]

This outcome did not, however, stop the defeated guildsmen from seek-ing royal intercession barely a year later. In July 1453, the college of guild representatives dispatched two delegates to Paris to ask the king to can-cel all the measures enacted by the commissioners. To their surprise, the envoys also found a delegation of patricians in Paris, led by Jean Boutepoix, who had been sent by the other colleges of Tournai's urban government. Brought before the king, the two parties again used this forum to address contentious urban political issues. Reiterating their original complaints about bad governance, the guildsmen repeated that the deposed office-holders had committed 'great and enormous crimes (*grands et enormes*

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[83] *Croniques*, 151, 156–8; *Chronique*, 240; *Ordonnances des roys de France*, IV, 706–7; Verriest, *Les luttes sociales*, 133–5.
[84] *Chronique*, 475–8; *TR*, III, 166–72.
[85] *Chronique*, 494, 498–9, 503–5; *TR*, III, 178–89.

criemmes)'. Boutepoix and his men, upholding the work of the commissioners, warned the king of possible 'tumults, murmuring, and popular strife (*tumultes, murmures et rancunes populaires*)' in Tournai and asked him to take further measures against the guilds. In the event, the king postponed his decision because of the more pressing issue of reconquering Gascony.[86]

Although there were some differences in the nature and the dynamics of the conflicts in 1365–7 and 1451–3, it is notable how their protagonists embarked on very similar patterns of behaviour. Highly contentious and interspersed with violent episodes, these were no less deep-reaching conflicts than those witnessed in an altogether different form in Liège. The involvement of external political agencies, in particular, marked an escalation of conflict which could have major repercussions on urban politics. The events of July 1453, in fact, became a highly contentious political issue in Tournai in the following months. Upon returning to the city, the guild delegates informed the college of guild representatives that Boutepoix and his men had also appeared before the king. Worse, they had made scandalous allegations, which, as it later turned out, included an assertion that merchants and artisans were not worthy of governing Tournai and that the city was best ruled by patricians alone. Various local constitutional mechanisms were now activated. The college of guild representatives decided to address the issue in the joint meeting of all four municipal colleges and to ask for the original record of Boutepoix's statement to be read out. In the event, the other colleges rejected the request, but this meeting was so important even to Boutepoix that he left the side of his dying wife in order to attend. On 29 August 1453, at a separate meeting of the college of guild representatives, a majority decided that the record should be read before the commons of Tournai regardless. This indeed happened and lasted for more than two hours. The guildsmen's opponents, however, reacted quickly: over the following days, they arrested three guild leaders and, in spite of an attempted riot on the place du Bécquerel by weavers and fullers, the *prevôts* and the college of the *jurés* condemned them to death by decapitation and banished several more.[87]

Why was Tournai's politics relatively stable in spite of these various tensions? A central role was undoubtedly played by the city's particular geo-political position. Under the direct jurisdiction of the French crown amidst the complex political landscape of the Southern Low Countries, Tournai entertained special relations with the kings of France and was able to carve out for itself an unusual degree of autonomy which went

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[86] *Chronique*, 509–11; *TR*, III, 199–202.　　[87] *Chronique*, 520–5.

beyond that of other especially privileged cities, known as *bonnes villes*, in the kingdom. Facing the rich county of Flanders as an increasingly difficult neighbour, especially once it was acquired by the powerful dukes of Burgundy, the Tournaisiens were happy to seek the support of the kings of France, who, in return, were generous in their dealings with the city.[88] Unlike cities in Flanders, the majority of Tournai citizens, in fact, stayed loyal to their overlord in troubled times. They were loyal to King Philip IV during his war with the count of Flanders at the end of the thirteenth century, and they held out against a three-month siege by English troops in 1340.[89] Tournai also did not join Ghent in its war against the count of Flanders and the king of France in 1379–85: instead, citizens of Tournai acted as mediators between the warring parties, and Tournai was the site of peace negotiations in 1382 and 1385. Moreover, the city supplied troops when the king intervened in the war, and also hosted King Charles VI for a long period between 1382 and 1383, although there was also unrest amongst Flemish sympathizers in Tournai, who appear to have liberated some of the prisoners held there in conjunction with the war.[90] In return, the Tournaisiens were able to retain many of their jurisdictional liberties. In their negotiations with Paris, they were at pains to emphasize that their particular geo-political position required a more benign and generous attitude from the king. In a dispute over the jurisdictional immunity of the personnel of the controversial royal mint in Tournai, brought before the Paris *Parlement* in February 1417, the city's lawyers readily pointed out that because the city was situated in a frontier zone it required special privileges for the prosecution of crimes—a rhetoric that the king of France himself adopted in the privileges bestowed on this city.[91] In such a context, Tournai's political framework was somewhat protected: the Tournaisiens were willing to accept the external framework of constitutional mechanisms, which they could at any rate manipulate, while the king acknowledged, and even guaranteed, the city's autonomy. The sheer threat of revolts which might upset this balance was a powerful device in the city's

[88] Small, 'Centre and Periphery'. On *bonnes villes*, see Chevalier, *Les bonnes villes*, 93–112. Other *bonnes villes*, such as La Rochelle, may have seen similar patterns of conflict, although arguably the *Tournaisiens* had even greater liberties in negotiating conflicts through a variety of different institutions: Naegle, *Stadt, Recht und Krone*, II, 475–506.

[89] Gilles le Muisit, *Chronica*, 222–4; d'Herbomez, 'Philippe le Bel et le Tournaisiens'; d'Herbomez, 'Les constitutions de Tournai'.

[90] *Chronique*, 242, 245–7, 253–5, 274, 281, 287, 357–8; *Croniques*, 275, 283; AN, JJ 122.

[91] AN, X 2a, 17, fos. 256v–259v, 354r. In 1409, Charles VI himself justified a privilege by pointing out that Tournai was 'situated at the borders of our kingdom (*assise ès confins de nostre royaume*)': *Ordonnances de roys de France*, IX, 521. See Gauvard, 'L'opinion publique', 134–6.

negotiations with the king. In January 1370, Charles V reduced his hearth tax by one third after he had been advised by the governor, bishop, dean, and chapter of Tournai that he would otherwise risk resistance from the city.[92] The argument still worked in subsequent years: in September 1406 the city was exempted from a tax because its procurator at Paris had successfully warned about the 'great murmuring in the city', while in April 1419 the urban government refused to anticipate payment of 6,000 *livres* because it was too dangerous to assemble parishes.[93]

In such a context it was not surprising that even the mutually hostile political coalitions of 1365 and 1451 would seek to strengthen their positions by recourse to the mechanisms offered by Tournai's external political framework. This system of conflict, however, came under severe strain in the 1410s and broke apart in the 1420s, when Tournai's geo-political position radically changed. Provoked by King Charles VI's bouts of madness, divisions between the parties of Burgundians and Armagnacs escalated into outright civil war in the kingdom of France in the 1410s.[94] This also provoked friction in Tournai, where pro-Burgundian groups, including prominent political figures like the city's former *prévôt* Marc Villain, allegedly attempted to deliver the city to the duke of Burgundy in June 1414 and May 1416.[95] The situation, however, worsened dramatically for Tournai when an unprecedented alliance between Charles VI (no longer speaking for the whole of the kingdom), King Henry V of England, and Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy culminated in the Treaty of Troyes (May 1420). This treaty foresaw the union of Valois France and Lancastrian England and required an oath of allegiance from all subjects. Suddenly, Tournai, which stubbornly refused to commit to the oath, found itself completely isolated in Anglo-Burgundian territories. The treaty ended a culture of special protection to which the Tournaisiens had been accustomed, and led to a substantial rise of financial demands by both Paris and the duke, which Tournai found increasingly hard to decline. This eventually culminated in the treaty of June 1423, which promised Tournai peaceful relations with Burgundy in return for a hefty sum of 4,000 crowns. As we have seen, this treaty fundamentally split the

[92] *Chronique*, 250–1; *Ordonnances des roys de France*, V, 349–51.
[93] 'grant murmuire dans la ville', 'Lettres closes de Charles VI', 28; *TR*, I, 177.
[94] The best study of the war is Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons*.
[95] On 1414, *TR*, I, 108, 115–16; AN, X 1a, 61, fos. 112v–114v. On 1416, *TR*, I, 127, 131–2; AN, X 2a, 16, fos. 354v, 357v–358r, 390v–391r; AN, X 2a, 17, fos. 262v, 266r, 278v; *Chronique*, 361; *Journal de Clément de Fauquembergue*, I, 8–10. On Villain, *TR*, I, 54, 62–3, 92–3, 103, 115, 130–1, 155–9, 209. Also accused were Enguerrand de Sottenghien (a later exile of the 1423 regime), the royal procurator Willaume Cathine, and Pierre Hostelart.

Tournaisiens. Supporters of the duke argued in favour of the treaty, but eventually a coalition of guildsmen and a part of the patriciate revolted against the Anglo-Burgundian regime in the same month.[96]

In this changed geo-political context, revolt became a viable option. In fact, all the different institutions hitherto involved in stimulating bargaining through constitutional mechanisms were now geared to supporting opposing insurgent coalitions in the city. The dauphin Charles VII, who had been disinherited by the Treaty of Troyes and led the Armagnac party, which still controlled large parts of France, openly supported and fuelled the revolt, because Tournai was his only remaining outpost in North-Eastern France. In 1422, when the philo-Burgundian faction was negotiating the treaty with Burgundy, Charles abolished the *bailliage* of Tournai-Tournaisis, pledged the income from the mint to the town, confirmed all its privileges, and awarded it the highly profitable tolls of Bapaume and Péronne.[97] These offers certainly strengthened the resolve of the 1423 coalition to ally against the treaty with Burgundy. They were to be rewarded in the coming years. Charles confirmed all the charters of the guilds in perpetuity, promised not to pardon any of their enemies, authorized the town authorities to compel church institutions to contribute to municipal finances, and at least twice acquitted them of their annual tax payments, although the dramatic political situation forced him to end his generosity in 1427.[98] The duke of Burgundy, by contrast, supported those who were exiled in 1423 and in the following years. The exiles looked to the duke for help with their attempted coup in 1426, while in the same year the duke, the Four Members of Flanders, the governor of Lille, and the towns of Bruges, Oudenaarde, and Ghent all sought to intervene with the town authorities of Tournai to broker a return of the exiles.[99]

Other external institutions also became directly involved in urban warfare. The successful insurgent coalitions of the 1420s managed to avoid prosecution from the *Parlement* which Charles had set up at Poitiers. Aside from two minor cases it refrained from pronouncing itself on any cases relating to the turmoil in Tournai, although we know from the notifications which the town authorities received that several exiles had filed

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[96] *TR*, I, 160–71, 173–4, 177, 181–91, 241–2, 257; *TR*, II, 18–19, 24–5. On the lead-up to the revolt, Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 115–205; Small, 'Centre and Periphery', 160–6.

[97] AN, J 607; Archives de l'État, Tournai, P 251; *TR*, II, 23, 30–1, 33; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 157–61, 477–8.

[98] Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 508–12, 517, 527; *TR*, II, 212, 247. Two, perhaps half-hearted, attempts by Dauphinist commissions to pacify the city in 1424 and 1426 had little success: *Chronique*, 386–7, 390–1; *TR*, II, 110.

[99] *TR*, II, 215–20, 234–8, 252; *Chronique*, 397–9; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 354–60, 372–3.

suits. There is no doubt that this was a major legitimating factor for the new regime at Tournai. On its request Charles even halted all appeals to Poitiers for a year in 1425.[100] The *bailli*, the king's chief judicial officer, also became directly enmeshed in revolt and urban warfare. Although initially abolished as one of Charles's concessions to the insurgents, the *bailliage* of Tournai and the Tournaisis was re-established by him in the autumn of 1423. Guilard de Moy, initially a supporter of the insurgents, was appointed *bailli*, but he then appears to have fallen out with the Tournai regime and ended up sustaining the cause of the insurgent coalition's enemies at Charles's court.[101] Similarly, between 1425 and 1428, two candidates, both of whom had been given the *bailliage* by Charles, vied for this position and ended up dividing the city.[102]

Another player who became involved in the partisan confrontations of the 1420s, albeit on the side of the 1423 coalition's opponents, was the bishop of Tournai, Jean de Thoisy. As chancellor of the duke of Burgundy, the bishop had not only played a crucial role in negotiating the Treaty of Troyes, but had also been one of the duke's principal representatives in the controversial negotiations over Tournai's treaties with the duke.[103] The bishop and his agents may also have actively tried to play into the internal divisions of Tournai. In July 1423—just one month after the revolt—the bishop sentenced the alleged heretic Gilles Meursault to be burnt for distributing eighty pamphlets in the city. Meursault, however, enjoyed a following in the city and his arrest prompted popular protest, in the wake of which one Jacquemart de Bléharies attempted to free him from the episcopal prisons. Jacquemart was himself condemned as a heretic in January 1427, and this stimulated yet another popular skirmish, which could only be stopped by an assembly of guilds which had hastily been called by the urban government. Jacquemart may have been associated with the tailor Jean de Bléharies, who had played a central role in the 1423 revolt, but had fallen out with the regime and incited assemblies against it as early as August 1423, around the same time as the Meursault affair had taken place.[104] The role of the bishop, and that of the other players

[100] AN, X 2a, 18, fos. 176r–176v; AN, X 2a, 21, fos. 39v–40r, 118v–119r; *TR*, II, 193; *Ordonnances des roys de France*, XIII, 103–4; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 316. See Little, *Parlement of Poitiers*, 154–6.

[101] *TR*, II, 102; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 248, 253.

[102] *TR*, II, 135, 160–1, 192–3, 264–71, 288; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 323–4.

[103] Champion and de Thoisy, *Bourgogne, France-Angleterre*, 182–216, 290–7, 313–21.

[104] *Corpus documentorum inquisitionis*, I, nos. 252, 258, 266, 272, 275; *TR*, II, 21, 56, 224–9, 367–8; 'Troubles à Tournai', 304–5, 323–4: this chronicle is the only narrative source to report Jacquemart's involvement. On Jean de Bléharies, see *TR*, II, 63, 102, 164–6, 226; *Chronique*, 384–7; Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 216–17, 223, 247, 249, 272, 310, 388–9, 402, 411–13. The accusations against Meursault formed part of a

involved in the convulsions of the 1420s, contrasted starkly with the less engaged one they had played previously. The king, the duke of Burgundy, the Parlement, the *bailli*, and the bishop now stimulated and openly furthered revolt. Under the pressures of war, Tournai's constitutional system of conflict had, if only temporarily, given rise to urban warfare.

The political histories of Tournai and Florence were no less turbulent than those of Bologna and Liège, but urban warfare and revolt played an altogether less prominent role in political interactions in these cities. The systems of conflict of Tournai and Florence were predominantly characterized by bargaining which, alongside relatively lower levels of violence, crystallized around manipulating existing constitutional mechanisms or adding new ones. Although the two cities were very different from each other, city dwellers in each encountered political structures which conditioned their behaviour in similar ways. In both cities, political units such as neighbourhood associations, factions, and guilds had been rooted in urban political processes for a relatively long period and constituted platforms through which action groups could confront each other. The plurality of long-established independent communal institutions in Florence, as well as the internal and external plurality of jurisdictional institutions in Tournai under the special protection of the French king, further encouraged such practices of conflict and provided the mechanisms through which they could be negotiated.

The case of Tournai in the 1420s shows what could happen when such a framework was torn apart; however, these changes were only temporary, and the previous political conditions were soon restored. After 1429, Charles VII's campaign rapidly gained pace following his victory at Orléans, and pressure from the duke of Burgundy substantially receded. This also ended some of the city's internal divisions. When several key Burgundian partisans were eventually allowed to return to Tournai in the late 1420s and early 1430s, they also accepted its Dauphinist allegiance in a reversed geo-political context. By the time conflicts re-emerged in the 1450s, Tournai's political system was once again centred on constitutional mechanisms.[105]

It has already been suggested that even the Medici accepted certain features of Florence's constitutional system of conflict, while busily

wider campaign against alleged 'Hussite' heretics in the Scheldt valley, although there seems too little evidence to suggest that such a movement could have fuelled the 1423 revolt; on this question, see Fudge, 'Heresy and the Question of Hussites', 81–5.

[105] *TR*, I, 115, 155–9, 254; *TR*, II, 17; *Chronique*, 574; *Croniques*, 349–50. There was an attempted uprising in 1435: *TR*, III, 9, 13; 'Nombreux extraits de condamnations à mort', 299.

manipulating and transforming it for their purposes. The outbreak of major conflicts after the demise of the Medici regime at the end of the fifteenth century demonstrates that divisions, however concealed at times under the veneer of constitutional mechanisms, continued to be part of such a political framework and could, on occasion, also lead to elevated levels of violence and forced change-overs of power. In the 1520s, Machiavelli still focused at great length in his *Florentine Histories* on Florence's 'civil discords and internal enmities' around which the city's peculiar system of conflict had crystallized. Himself a thinker and actor operating within the framework of the Florentine constitution, Machiavelli acknowledged the crucial role of conflict in the development of the city's peculiar political practices, reminding his readers that 'if no other lesson is useful to the citizens who govern republics, it is that which shows the causes of the hatreds and divisions in the city'.[106]

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[106] Machiavelli, *Florentine Histories*, 6 (Proemium).

7

Lille and Verona

Contained Systems of Conflict

On 1 November 1407, thirteen individuals were apprehended in Lille and fined for unlawful arms-bearing on the first day in office of the city's annually renewed urban government.[1] None of these men came from office-holding families and several had previously been involved in violent conflict, including against office-holders. One of them, Lotart Yzac, had been banished in 1403 for being 'a riotous and quarrelsome man of dishonest character'.[2] However, if this was an attempt by political opponents to gather against the urban government, it was unsuccessful and nothing came of it. While weavers in Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres were staging protests at around this time, and Liège had already been in revolt against its prince-bishop for over one year, the city of Lille remained more or less quiet. Similarly, in the 1420s, when its neighbouring city of Tournai experienced three revolts in just one decade, little evidence for elevated levels of political conflict can be found for Lille.[3] Unlike the other cities of this study, Lille experienced hardly any urban warfare at all and its system of conflict encouraged other forms of contestation. In this chapter, it will be considered alongside the case of Verona, which, like Lille, was a major city in its region, and which also exhibited low levels of conflict, both inside the city as well as vis-à-vis the governments to which it was subject. This absence of revolts in Lille and Verona was a result of the contained nature of the polycentric political order of both cities in which various forms of protest constituted the principal mode of political conflict.

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[1] AML, 16150, fos. 15r–15v.

[2] 'rihouteux et mellieux homme de deshoneste conversacion', ADN, B, 6281. Other involvements in violence: AML, 16146, fo. 13v; AML, 16154, fos. 16r–16v; ADN, B, 6289, 6295–6, 6298–9, 6304.

[3] For the Flemish cities, see Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 26–7. For Liège, see Chapter 5. For Tournai, see Chapter 6.

Verona has been immortalized by Shakespeare as a city of violent factional warfare. The city's system of conflict was, however, quite similar to Lille's, although groups in Verona were somewhat more likely to contest governmental authority more directly. From 1405, Verona was under the rule of the Venetian Republic and, even though some small-scale and unsuccessful attempts at revolt were made against the Serenissima in 1412 and 1439, Verona largely remained a city which mounted no serious challenge to Venice and experienced few internal political divisions. With the exception of a brief interlude of Habsburg rule in 1509–17, Verona remained part of the Venetian state until Napoleon's conquest in the late eighteenth century and was, partly for this reason, one of the most politically 'stable' Italian cities.[4] Before becoming part of the Venetian *terraferma* state, Verona had been ruled since the later thirteenth century by the powerful della Scala family on whose consolidation of the city-state's political structures Venice partly built. The city's most turbulent years were arguably the eighteen years leading up to the Venetian takeover. The della Scala were swept from power when Giangaleazzo Visconti, ruler of the Milanese state, conquered Verona in October 1387. Nearly two decades later, the city came under the jurisdiction of Carrara Padua in April 1404, and was finally acquired by Venice in June 1405.[5]

The behaviour of Verona's population through these various transfers of power is indicative of the wider logic of the city's system of conflict. These regime changes entailed few divisions within Verona's body politic and did not lead to urban warfare between rival coalitions. The active participation or passive connivance of city dwellers played a part in the transfers of power, but the precarious geo-political situation of the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries as well as the sheer force of the invading armies were arguably more decisive. Milanese troops entered Verona on the night of 17 October 1387 on the back of a military campaign that brought large parts of Northern Italy under Visconti control. In spite of some initial resistance, the troops swiftly moved in with the help of Verona's major families and a council was convened as early as 20 October to offer the commune's submission to Milan. The Milanese

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[4] The best introduction to Verona's history under Venice in the fifteenth century, apart from the more specific works cited below, are the contributions in *Il primo dominio veneziano a Verona*; Law, *Commune of Verona*; Law, *Venice and the Veneto*; Varanini, *Comuni cittadini e stato regionale*; and Lanfranco, 'La vita politica, economica e amministrativa'. On 1509–17, Varanini, 'La terraferma al tempo della crisi'; and Varanini, 'La terraferma di fronte alla sconfitta'. Political conflict was not absent from early modern Verona, but its levels remained low; see Vecchiato, ' "Del quieto et pacifico vivere" turbato'.

[5] For these periods of Veronese history, see Varanini, *Gli Scaligeri*; Varanini, 'Istituzioni, politica e società'; De Marco, *Crepuscolo degli Scaligeri*; Galli, 'La dominazione viscontea'; Soldi Rondinini, 'La dominazione viscontea'.

takeover did lead to the exile or marginalization of former followers of the della Scala, but the bulk of the citizenry seems to have actively or grudgingly gone along with the transfer of power without any major divisions.[6] A similar situation prevailed in the early years of the fifteenth century, when the Milanese state had collapsed after Giangaleazzo Visconti's death and exposed the city to Venice's expansionist drive. On 22 June 1405, after half a year of incursions into the Veronese area, the *popolo* of Verona and most of the major citizens gathered on the market square with their arms, appointed a captain, Pietro da Sacco, and decided to hand the city over to Venice, whose troops entered Verona on the following day. Negotiations were conducted between the Veronese and the Venetian commander Iacopo dal Verme, himself a prominent landowner in the Veronese contado. Veronese demands concerning communal and contado jurisdiction, property rights, and taxation were all incorporated into *capitula* (pacts) on the basis of which the commune of Verona formally surrendered its power to Venice at the end of the month. No major divisions ensued.[7]

A similar story had also been true for Verona's acquisition by Carrara Padua a year earlier.[8] The relatively low levels of division within the city are most clearly brought out by the recipients of knighthoods in the wake of this takeover. As Table 7.1 suggests, many of the thirteen families whose members were rewarded in this way also played a leading role in supporting or negotiating the Venetian takeover in 1405, and there is no evidence to suggest that the others, with the possible exception of the Maffei family, were opposed to it. All of them had also already been involved with the della Scala regime in the past. Divisions and related attempts at urban warfare were, however, not completely absent from the city. The closest the city ever came to urban warfare

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[6] The conquest was actively supported by members of the Bevilacqua, Nogarola, and Malaspina families, all of which had already been exiled by 1387. There was further support by other named Veronese citizens within Verona as well as by the *popolo minuto*. The best account is in Gatari, *Cronaca carrarese*, 301–2; it broadly overlaps with the version of events in Mussi, *Chronicon placentinum*, col. 549; *Annales mediolanenses*, col. 803; Dalla Corte, *Dell'istorie*, II, 300–4; Zagata, 9. One eyewitness, the della Scala supporter Marzagaia, found himself exiled, but also emphasized that Veronese opinion had mostly swung against the della Scala: Marzagaia, 'De modernis gestis', 3, 14, 135, 164–5. There was a possible purge of della Scala followers in Verona's *Collegio dei Giudici e Avvocati*: Varanini, 'Lo statuto del 1399', 26–8.

[7] This version of events is even confirmed by chronicles that were friendly to the Paduan rulers then governing Verona; see Gatari, *Cronaca carrarese*, 556–7; 'Cronica de Verona', 344–5. For broadly similar accounts, see also Dalla Corte, *Dell'istorie*, II, 358–64; Sanudo, col. 829; Zagata, 46; Delayto, *Annales estenses*, cols. 1026–7. On the transition of 1405, see Biadego, 'Dante e l'umanesimo veronese'.

[8] This take-over happened with the initial support of the della Scala who were, however, later ousted by the Carrara. See Zagata, 34, 39–42; Gatari, *Cronaca carrarese*, 514–16, 526–7; 'Cronica de Verona', 340; Mitocoli, 'Parva cronica', 159–60; Dalla Corte, *Dell'istorie*, II, 333–5, 340–2; Delayto, *Annales estenses*, cols. 995–6, 999–1000.

Table 7.1 Verona: The support of families for different regimes[a]

Supporters of Padua	Supporters of della Scala	Leading role in the Venetian takeover of 1405
Bevilacqua	X	X
Cavolongo, da	X	X
Cipriani	X	—
Fracastoro	X	X
Maffei	X	—
Montagna	X	—
Nogarola[b]	X	X
Pellegrini	X	X
Quinto, da[b]	X	X
Salerni	X	X
Serego, da	X	—
Tornielli	X	—
Verità	X	X

[a] The basis of this table are those Veronese families which were knighted for their services by the Carrara lords of Padua on their acquisition of Verona in April 1404. Also knighted on this occasion were supporters from Padua and three individuals (Gregorio da Lion, Guidotto da Monselice, and Ramondino Guazzardo) whose provenance is unclear.

[b] Family that soon fell out with the Venetian regime.

Sources: For the list of knighthoods, see Gatari, *Cronaca carrarese*, 523, to be compared to Zagata, 39–42; 'Cronica de Verona', 340–1; Verci, *Storia della Marca Trivigiana e Veronese*, XVIII, no. 2025. For the della Scala supporters, see the data collected in Varanini, *Gli Scaligeri*. For the Venetian takeover, see Biadego, 'Dante e l'umanesimo veronese', 411–13; Dalla Corte, *Dell'istorie*, 360, 365; Sanudo, cols. 820–23; *I libri commemoriali della Repubblica di Venezia*, lib. X, no. 5; Zagata, 44; Soldi Rondinini, 'La dominazione viscontea', 229.

was an uprising against the Milanese regime which turned out to be a disaster. In June 1390, a coalition of followers of the della Scala and the *popolo minuto* sacked the houses of sympathizers of Milan and elected a captain. Within three days, Milanese troops, possibly supported by the insurgent coalition's internal opponents, retaliated and famously sacked the city. It is not surprising that this event, in a city unused to urban warfare, was also recorded in a *graffito* in the abbey of San Zeno which read: '1390, 29 June Verona was robbed'.[9]

[9] '1390 dì 29 di zuono fo robà Verona'. The main sources are (but note that only the first four chroniclers, writing in the Milanese state, stressed internal divisions): Mussi, *Chronicon placentinum*, col. 553; *Annales mediolanenses*, col. 814; Sacchi (Platina), *Historia urbis mantuae*, col. 754; Sozomen, *Specimen historiae*, col. 1114; Zagata, 17; Gatari, *Cronaca carrarese*, 424–5; Dalla Corte, *Dell'istorie*, II, 314–15; Verci, *Storia della Marca Trivigiana e Veronese*, XVII, no. 1927. For this uprising, see also Soldi Rondinini, 'La dominazione viscontea', 127–8; Galli, 'La dominazione viscontea', 514.

Lille was even quieter than Verona. After over sixty years of direct rule under the French crown, this city was returned to the count of Flanders in 1369, and was to remain under comital jurisdiction after the acquisition of the county of Flanders by the dukes of Burgundy in 1384.[10] Apart from a minor incident in 1369, there is no further evidence for any revolts within the city or against the counts. The counts frequently resided in the city and also often withdrew to Lille during moments of acute crisis, such as the war against rebellious Ghent in 1379–85.[11] It is telling that Lille would even remain stable throughout the major upheavals in the Low Countries during the wars with Spain in the later sixteenth century.[12] The only major episode of contention in this period gives a sense of how unlikely the occurrence of urban warfare was in Lille. In November 1386, the échevins of Lille, the members of Lille's chief executive council, offended Charles VI, king of France, by barring him and his troops from entering the city. This unusual provocation was only resolved once the king's uncle, the duke of Berry, denounced the Lillois for behaving 'like a bad mercenary captain and traitor[s] against their lord', after which the king was eventually let into the city. The échevins were arrested and the Lillois defended themselves by arguing that the duke of Burgundy had instructed them two months earlier not to let any major body of troops into the city. While this ducal ordinance still survives, it may at least be wondered whether the Lillois did not want to use this episode as a form of protest, although against whom is hard to ascertain. It may well have been aimed at the king, who sought to regain jurisdiction over Lille in these years, but it could equally well have been a way of embarrassing the duke of Burgundy, with whom the échevinage of Lille were negotiating a reduction of their crushing tax burden in these very months. A royal council meeting of eight to ten hours was needed before the échevins were released and pardoned. In any case, unlikely rebels as the Lillois were, the affair was resolved with gifts of wine of more than forty-seven *livres* to the king, the duke of Burgundy and his son, as well as the dukes of Berry and Bourbon. Compared to some of the other conflicts seen in previous chapters, this was a tame affair and it is testimony to the absence of urban warfare and the importance of other modes of conflict in Lille.[13]

[10] Lille remains curiously understudied. Apart from more specific studies discussed below, the best introductions are Trénard, *Histoire de Lille*; Clauzel, *Finances et politique*; Derville, 'De 1300 à 1500'.

[11] *Croniques*, 163–5; *Roisin: franchises, lois et coutumes*, 422–6. On the duke's presence in the 1380s, *Croniques*, 234–5, 243, 247, 265–71; *Itinéraires de Philippe le Hardi et de Jean Sans Peur*, 164–6, 169–70.

[12] See Duplessis, *Lille and the Dutch Revolt*, 203–306.

[13] 'ilz fasoient comme mauvais routier et trayttre contre seigneur', *Croniques*, 292–5 (at 293); AML, 8/110 (24 August 1386); AML, 16117, fo. 23v. For the French crown's claims

The historiography of both Lille and Verona has generally stressed the quiet nature of both cities. In the case of Verona, historians have been altogether more alert to the possibility of conflict, although the subject has not received much attention, not least because the study of conflict has until recently also been largely absent from the historiography of the Venetian state in general.[14] Part of the problem in reconstructing the political lives of Lille and Verona is that neither city possessed a particularly extensive culture of chronicle writing. Although Lille had a very rich literary tradition in the form of drama, no chronicles survive that can be traced back to the city in this period.[15] There were a number of contemporary narrative accounts from Verona, but the information they give on urban political life is often limited.[16]

The relative scarcity of local narrative writing is, however, offset by a very rich corpus of administrative sources. The survival of the registers of the urban government's ordinances in Lille reveals how concerned the city's holders of power were about the presence of conflict. Between 1382 and 1430, the urban government issued as many as fifty-four ordinances against illegal arms-bearing—nearly half of them in the 1420s, when Tournai, barely thirty kilometres away, underwent a period of intense conflict. Ordinances laying down the marching order of guilds or banning illicit gatherings revealed further concerns about protests at the famous Procession of Lille, Corpus Christi, or Saint John the Baptist's Day.[17] Further opportunities to reconstruct the city's patterns of conflict

on Lille, settled in 1387, see *Ordonnances de Philippe le Hardi, de Marguerite de Male et de Jean sans Peur*, I, 203–16; Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 93–5. For the discontent over taxation in the 1380s, Clauzel, 'Lille à l'avènement de la période bourguignonne'.

[14] For Lille, see especially Duplessis, *Lille and the Dutch Revolt*, 17–199, 307–20; Clauzel, 'Les élites urbaines et le pouvoir municipal', 254–7; Knight, 'Processional Theatre'; but for an emphasis on conflict see now Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La ville des cérémonies*, 120–7, 141–4; Lantschner, 'Voices of the People'. For the scarce literature on conflicts in Verona, see Varanini, 'Nelle città della Marca Trevigiana'; Law, *Commune of Verona*, 302–67, partly published in Law, 'Venice, Verona and the della Scala'; Cessi, 'Congiure e congiurati scaligeri e carraresi'. On the 'myth of Venice', Grubb, 'When Myths Lose Power'.

[15] Lefebvre, *Les origines du théâtre*. Note, for instance, the more than seventy surviving plays for the annual procession of Lille, compiled in the second half of the fifteenth century in a manuscript which has been edited in *Les mystères de la procession de Lille*.

[16] The principal contemporary chronicles are Pier Zagata, *Cronica* and the two chronicles edited in *Parte inedita della cronica di anonimo veronese*. Other contemporary narrative sources are Mitocoli, 'Parva cronica' (by a supporter of the della Scala); 'Cronica de Verona' (written when Verona was under Carrara rule); Marzagaia, 'Opuscula' and 'De modernis gestis' (by a Scala supporter who arranged himself with succssive regimes). Another useful source is Girolamo Dalla Corte, *Dell'istorie*, a history of Verona written in the sixteenth century. On the writing of memoirs in the Veneto, see James Grubb's introduction in *Family Memoirs from Verona and Vicenza*, v–xxvi.

[17] The registers in question are AML, 373–6. I have worked through them for the period 1382–1430, but no records survive for 1384–95 and 1407–14. For religious festivals, see Chapter 2, p. 44.

are offered by other records surviving from the apparatus of urban government, such as municipal accounts, judicial documents, and lists of office-holders and citizens.[18] These can be supplemented by records involving ducal appointments, such as the *bailli* of Lille, Douai, and Orchies, the *prévôt* of Lille, or other external political agencies.[19]

The sources associated with a variety of political institutions in Verona also provide extensive opportunities to trace patterns of conflict. These records offer a particular close-up view of the varieties of petitioning and practices of conflict associated with the many judicial channels available to Veronese citizens. After all, as a judicial manual from Verona still stated as late as the eighteenth century, there were as many as fifteen different local judicial offices, three Venetian magistracies in Verona, and several agencies in Venice itself to which Veronese citizens could turn as jurisdictions of first instance, courts of appeal, or both.[20] In addition to the archives of the commune itself, it is also possible to study the documentation of the chief economic tribunal supervising the city's guilds, the *Domus Mercatorum*, as well as the powerful *Collegio dei Giudici e Avvocati*, the college of the city's lawyers.[21] The presence of Venetian government in Verona is principally documented in the records of the chief Venetian officials in Verona (the podestà and *capitano*, known as *rettori*) as well as the letters of the Venetian chancery (*Lettere ducali*).[22] Finally, the extraordinary archives of political and judicial institutions in the capital Venice contain traces of Veronese political activity brought before the agencies of the Serenissima as well as the Venetians' occasionally suspicious attitudes towards the inhabitants of their subject cities.[23]

Of course, many of the practices of conflict visible in Lille and Verona were available in other cities. However, they acquired a particular relevance in contained systems of conflict because they were effectively the *only* channels available to discontented citizens. City dwellers were encouraged to pursue such forms of conflict by the political structures inside and outside

[18] AML, Comptes de la ville, Registres aux mémoires, and Registres aux papiers de la Loi; BML, MS 674.

[19] Many of these are preserved in AML, Registres aux titres. They also survive in ADN, Série B. Various material has also been edited in *Ordonnances de Philippe le Hardi, de Marguerite de Male et de Jean sans Peur*; *Ordonnances de Jean sans Peur*; *Roisin: franchises, lois et coutumes*; *Textes historiques sur Lille et le Nord*; Espinas, *Les origines du droit d'association*.

[20] Micheli, *L'ordine del procedere*.

[21] ASVer, AAC, Atti del Consiglio; ASVer, Casa dei Mercanti; ASVer, Ufficio del Registro.

[22] ASVer, Atti dei Rettori Veneti; ASVer, AAC, Lettere ducali.

[23] I have consulted ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Lettere and Raspe; ASVen, Consiglio dei Dieci, Deliberazioni miste; ASVen, Senato, Deliberazioni, Misti and Secreti. This only covers some of the most important Venetian political institutions for the government of the *terraferma*. I have not consulted the appeals court of the *Auditori Nuovi*, which mainly focused on civil cases; see Viggiano, *Governanti e governati*, 147–77.

their cities. Internal political units, such as guilds and parishes, certainly existed, but were generally not sufficiently autonomous to play a decisive role in the political process. Insurgent coalitions were occasionally formed, but principally relied on the support of families whose resources were weaker than in other cities because of the nature of the cities' hinterland and the state structure. State agencies in both Verona and Lille contributed to these systems of conflict in different ways: they rendered the formation of coalitions difficult because of the particular configuration of the patronage network of the duke of Burgundy in Lille, or encouraged protests by petitioning within the judicial framework of the Venetian state. Therefore, both cities were characterized by a highly contained polycentric order which had the effect of constraining and channelling political conflict.

WEAK GUILDS AND PARISHES

Chapters 5 and 6 show that Bologna, Liège, Florence, and Tournai possessed important guild or parish structures, which allowed the articulation of conflict through protests, constitutional bargaining, or outright urban warfare. In Verona and Lille, guilds and parishes generally did not enjoy comparable levels of political autonomy and were altogether ineffective structures of mobilization for more intense conflicts. However, this did not entirely exclude them from a role in political conflict, because they could still provide the bases for lower-scale forms of protest and were, in the case of guilds, also bound into a tight judicial framework through which grievances could be articulated.

   Guilds in Lille and Verona lacked the resources and infrastructure of their counterparts in many other cities. This was most clearly reflected in their exclusion from direct representation on the urban government. In Lille, guilds played no formal part in the political process. Their organization and trade was tightly controlled by the municipal government and on occasion even by the duke of Burgundy himself.[24] This fundamentally distinguished Lille from the major cities in Flanders where guilds played a much more direct role in the city's governance. The relatively weak institutional position of guilds may well be attributable to the fact that, between 1305 and 1369, Lille—like its neighbours Douai and Orchies—had been under the direct rule of the king of France, while Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres had undergone fundamentally different political trajectories under

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[24] Marquant, *La vie économique*, 199–215; *Recueil de documents relatifs à l'histoire de l'industrie drapière*, III, 25–7; Espinas, *Les origines du droit d'association*, I, 862–9, II, 364–9, 379–88. For trade regulations, see the ample evidence in AML, 373–6.

the count of Flanders.[25] In Verona, the development of guild powers had also been stifled by the signoria of the della Scala family from the late thirteenth century, precisely when the guilds of Florence or Bologna expanded their powers. After 1390, the Veronese guilds largely lost their already limited political role in communal institutions. Although they could still elect their own officials and pass statutes, any decisions of the guilds required the ratification of the podestà and the *Domus Mercatorum*. This latter institution was headed by twelve merchants, laid down trade regulations, and constituted the supreme tribunal for disputes between guilds, although it increasingly had to share its jurisdictional powers with the commune and a variety of Venetian governmental institutions.[26] This situation left guilds with few opportunities to shape urban politics directly. However, in both cities a complex judicial framework did allow guild members to voice their grievances through a framework of arbitration, mediation, or adjudication offered by communal or external political agencies. This was not quite the same as enjoying direct bargaining powers in the urban government like the guilds of some other cities, but guildsmen in Verona and Lille could and did exploit the channels that were available to them for their benefit. A good test case may be the buoyant textile sector, in many cities the site of frequent disputes which were not only of interest to the parties in question, but could, as in the Ciompi revolt of Florence, turn into major city-wide conflicts.[27]

In Verona, the guilds of the weavers (*textari*) and teaselers (*garzatores*) frequently found themselves in contention with the *Domus Mercatorum*, which was dominated by the drapers (*draperii*). The drapers were in charge of the sale of finished textile products and often oversaw the production process, thereby frequently provoking conflicts between them and the artisans who wanted more autonomy.[28] In protest against this situation, the weavers, teaselers, and other artisans frequently appealed to the Venetian podestà or to the institutions of the central government in Venice, which, although naturally more sympathetic to the drapers, offered a variety of mechanisms of conflict resolution. One measure that exercised the minds of the weavers was that of the trade regulations of the *Domus Mercatorum* of August 1410, passed by an assembly without a single weaver present,

[25] For a similar argument on Douai, see Howell, 'Achieving the Guild Effect', 112–15.

[26] *Statuta Civilia Domus Mercatorum Veronae*, 31–73, 94–100. See also Varanini, 'Élites cittadine e governo dell'economia', 139–48.

[27] For the textile sector in Lille and Verona, see Chorley, 'The "draperies légères"', 158–60; Demo, *L'anima della città*, 70–110.

[28] See, for instance, the cases of 1394, 1402, and 1410 in ASVer, Casa dei Mercanti, 1, fos. 290r–297r. The first two are published in Gasparini, *Le aggiunte scaligere e viscontee*, clix–clxxxi.

which banned weavers from assuming any role outside their part in the manufacturing process. Possibly in response to their protest, the Venetian *rettori* called a special meeting on 29 May 1411 to discuss this measure, and invited representatives of the municipal government, merchants, and various other citizens, including drapers and a small number of weavers, to a meeting to arbitrate in the dispute and work out a reform of the present system. A commission was created and not even ten days later, on 8 June, another assembly accepted a reform proposal with a clear majority of seventy-nine to thirteen votes. The weavers, however, were still discontented because they objected to a provision which required them to deliver all their cloths to the central cloth hall (called *stanga*), a measure they presumably feared would have given the drapers unfair control over the production process. At this point, the *rettori* intervened in a mediatory capacity to change this provision slightly and required drapers to pay weavers for the delivery of cloth to the *stanga*. This solution was again subjected to a vote in the same assembly, but this time the *rettori* made sure that no drapers or weavers were present. It was passed by a majority of twenty-two to eighteen votes.[29]

Given the relatively minor benefits they obtained and the predominant role of the drapers, it must be doubted whether these complicated interactions actually helped the weavers, but the mere possibility of judicial redress did establish a process by which complaints could be made, and this in itself may have been enough for otherwise relatively powerless guildsmen to achieve at least some of their objectives. Such protests through judicial channels did not always work out in favour of the artisans. In summer 1417 a similar complaint of the teaselers against a *Domus* ban on their right to sell cloths in their workshops was rejected by another assembly which had been convoked by the podestà. When the teaselers went so far as to appeal this decision before the Venetian government, the doge upheld the assembly's decision.[30] By contrast, thirteen years later, in May 1430, the weavers were more successful with another appeal before the Venetian podestà, who intervened to change regulations that discriminated against them.[31]

Governmental authorities, on whose support such petition-based practices of conflict ultimately depended, were naturally keen to stress the

[29] ASVer, AAC, 56, fos. 162v–163v, 164v–167r, 173r; ASVer, Casa dei Mercanti, 1, fos. 296v–297r. The case is partly published in *Documenti dell'antico dialetto veronese nel secolo XV*, 1–3.

[30] ASVer, Casa dei Mercanti, 1, fos. 305v–310v; ASVer, Casa dei Mercanti, 2, fos. 106v–111v.

[31] ASVer, AAC, 10, fo. 100r. For other cases brought directly before Venetian institutions, see ASVer, Casa dei Mercanti, 1, fos. 302r–304r; ASVer, AAC, 57, fos. 109r–109v.

benefits of this system and emphasize its viability for the satisfaction of the guilds' objectives. In Lille, where the échevinage can be found mediating extensively both in disputes between and within guilds, the records put a heavy emphasis on the system's benefit for the 'common good'. On 30 October 1415, the échevinage settled a dispute between the tribunal overseeing all textile guilds—the *Perche de la Draperie*—and the guild of the shearers (*tondeurs*), as it stated, 'for the common good (*pour le bien commun*)'.[32] By contrast, on 22 August 1417, a joint appeal by guilds in the textile industry was rejected by the échevinage, the *bailli*, and the lieutenants of the governor and the *prévôt* of Lille because it was 'against the common good (*contre le bien commun*)'.[33] The legitimating rhetoric of the common good was also appropriated by the guilds themselves, if, at times, to serve their own particularist aims. In January 1433, the market salesmen of cloth (*gobilliers*) and drill workers (*kieutilliers*) asked that 'for the common weal (*pour le bien publicque*)' they should be given permission to sell cloth and furniture, even though this encroached upon the trading prerogatives of the second-hand clothes dealers (*vieswariers*), with whom they happened to form one common guild.[34] The availability of such judicial channels, in spite of ideological claims to the contrary, did not mean that such processes were always swift or effective, nor that they necessarily followed established and predictable patterns. Nevertheless, as discussed in Chapter 2, such judicial forms of protest did leave considerable initiative and room for manoeuvre to aggrieved parties, which could also often play off the various institutions to which they appealed.[35]

The guildsmen of Verona and Lille, in any case, had little choice other than to act through such imperfect channels. As for other cities with politically weak guild institutions—such as Douai, Ypres, or Venice—, there is little evidence for the involvement of guilds in insurgent coalitions.[36] The only exception is the possible participation of guilds in Verona's revolt against Milanese rule in 1390, after which the guild representatives (*gastaldioni*) lost their seats on Verona's urban government, perhaps because of their likely involvement in the revolt.[37] In Lille, the taverners' guild, in conflict with the échevinage over wine prices, got as far as staging a strike assembly (*monopole*) in 1434 and holding a meeting, as the records stated, 'in derision of the urban government'. However, while questions on beer

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[32] Espinas, *Les origines du droit d'association*, II, 371–4 (at 371).
[33] AML, 15914, fo. 69v.
[34] Espinas, *Les origines du droit d'association*, II, 387.
[35] See Chapter 2, pp. 45–7.
[36] Howell, 'Achieving the Guild Effect', 110–12; Haemers, *For the Common Good?*, 248–62; Romano, *Patricians and Popolani*, 65–90.
[37] Varanini, 'Note sui consigli civici veronesi', 6–12.

and wine prices in Tournai had formed part of the petition of an insurgent coalition in neighbouring Tournai in August 1428, the same issue in Lille did not lead to violent conflict, but was brought before the ducal *Chambre des Comptes*, where the appeal was rejected.[38]

If the guilds were ultimately limited in their powers, neighbourhood associations, like parishes, were rarely directly involved in the governance of Lille or Verona at all. This made them unlikely political players, differently from Tournai where we have seen that parishes played an important and institutionalized political role, which also allowed some parishes to function as mobilizing structures for insurgents in the 1420s. Lille's parishes, by contrast, appear to have had no specific role in the political life of the city except for the historic and, by the later fourteenth century, largely derelict role of the priests of the city's four oldest parishes (Saint-Étienne, Saint-Pierre, Saint-Maurice, and Saint-Sauveur) in the appointment of the échevinage. It is telling that the neighbourhood youth groups which participated in the city's major annual procession were not organized on the basis of parishes, but in different topographical units.[39] The situation concerning topographical structures was not altogether different in Verona. *Contrade* (which coincided only in part with parishes) only retained a relatively minor political role in the process of tax assessments, while the *Dodici* and *Cinquanta*, the commune's two principal institutions, were not elected on either a parish or a *contrada* basis.[40]

The exclusion of topographical associations from official political processes did not mean that neighbourhoods could not be involved in political protest. For instance, in Verona the revolt against Milan in 1390 may, at least in part, have been mobilized on a *contrada* basis. Of forty-four insurgents whose *contrada* provenance is known, seventeen, by far the biggest group, came from the *contrada* of San Nazaro, which also happened to be one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Verona with a high proportion of individuals employed in the textile industry. It may be significant that, of these, three were identified as *iurati, contrada* officials who were involved in the collection of information for tax (*estimo*) assessments.[41] However, apart

[38] 'en grant derision de ceulx de la dicte Loy', Espinas, *Les origines du droit d'association*, II, 387–9. For Tournai, see Houtart, *Les Tournaisiens et le roi de Bourges*, 397–400; *Chronique*, 400–1; *TR*, II, 274–6.

[39] Platelle, 'La vie religieuse à Lille', 331–3, 392–8; Clauzel, 'Le renouvellement de l'échevinage', 368; Knight, 'Processional Theatre', 101–2.

[40] Varanini, 'Famiglie patrizie, contrade e vicinato', 143–7. Note that there may have been an unsuccessful attempt in 1405 to introduce *contrada* provenance as a criterion for membership in the *Cinquanta*: Varanini, 'Note sui consigli civici veronesi', 17–19.

[41] 'L'amnistia del 1392', 473–4. The next biggest contingents were six individuals from Braida, and four each from San Paolo and San Vitale, all of which were poor or middling *contrade*. For the social composition of *contrade*, see Lodi, 'Il palazzo e la contrada'; Lanaro, 'Le botteghe e la città'.

from this case, no other attempts at revolt on a topographical basis could be found for Verona. At the same time, *contrade* were involved in the articulation of protest through other channels, including in affairs concerning parish churches. In 1410, the inhabitants of San Tomio brought a suit before the Venetian appeals court of the *Avogadori di Comun* to complain about the imposition of a parish priest by the Venetian officials against an appointment made earlier by the bishop. Thirty-three years later, they once again petitioned the Signoria of Venice to be given the permission to elect their own parish priest. It is telling for this system of conflict that such low levels of political engagement were tolerated by the Venetian state, while a similar attempt by the parish of Santa Maria delle Muratelle in Bologna to elect its own parish priest in 1414 led to a clampdown by the Bolognese authorities, with three people being fined and seventeen banished.[42]

Neighbourhoods inevitably remained a focus of associational life and a basis for the voicing of political objectives, especially for the lower reaches of society. In Lille, the authorities were highly concerned about the involvement of parishes in various forms of what it perceived as potentially subversive activities. For instance, the municipal government was alarmed about the large-scale evasion of beer and wine taxes in six parishes, five of which were located in the city's suburbs. On the request of the échevinage, the duke of Burgundy banned the sale of alcohol in these parishes at least eight times between 1405 and 1435. One of the suburban parishes in question—Sainte-Catherine, which was mainly composed of artisans and Flemish-speaking migrants—was incorporated into Lille in 1415.[43] On several occasions, assemblies and the playing of games in parish churches were forbidden, especially in the church of Saint-Étienne—with possibly 5,000 members Lille's largest parish—where twelve such injunctions were made between 1382 and 1419 alone. Bans on game-playing, especially gambling, were an obsessive preoccupation of the Lille authorities, and the échevinage passed as many as 117 ordinances on this subject between 1382 and 1430.[44] There was a broad range of religious and economic reasons for urban governments' concerns about gambling in this period, but the fear of disorder,

[42] ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Lettere, 666/2 (19 May 1410); ASVer, AAC, 11, fo. 66r. In Venice, parishes participated in the election of their clergy, at least before the sixteenth century: Prodi, 'Structure and Organisation', 419–21. For Bologna, ASB, PI, 301, no. 1, fos. 202r–212r.

[43] AML, 143/2672–2680–2686–2687; AML, 15879, fo. 240v; *Ordonnances de Jean sans Peur*, 30, 401–2, 483–4. The parishes in question were Wasemmes, Fives, Sainte-Madeleine, Saint-André, Sainte-Catherine, and Saint-Sauveur (the only central parish concerned).

[44] On Saint-Étienne: AML, 373, fos. 4r, 12r, 59r, 61v, 62r; AML, 374, fos. 35r, 71v, 80r, 87r, 109v, 128v, 165r; AML, 376, fos. 41v, 54r, 67v, 77v–78r. The ordinances against gambling are throughout AML, 373–6.

involving in particular the lower social classes, certainly also played a role in this legislation. Gamblers in Lille were frequently convicted for arms-bearing or other violent offences: Jean du Flosq, who in 1415 was fined for illegal gambling at his home, had been involved in eight cases of violent behaviour between 1403 and 1408, while all the members of a network of gamblers who were fined in 1409 were involved in previous or later violent crimes.[45] It is no wonder, then, that the municipal authorities were concerned about such activities in parish settings, particularly in times of political crisis. In June 1382, in the wake of Ghent's war against the count of Flanders, the municipal government of Lille passed a whole host of measures against violence, including a ban on gambling and gaming houses which was then ratified by the count of Flanders 'for the protection and safety of our city of Lille'. Only a month later, on 19 July 1382, an ordinance specifically singled out the parishes of Sainte-Madeleine and Saint-Étienne, as well as the Franciscan church, as places of assembly and game-playing, and this ordinance was repeated in 1384.[46]

The preoccupations of the Lille authorities are a reminder that its parish, like its guild structures, could not be discounted as possible bases of political conflict. Whether through concealed forms of protest or through the judicial channels available to them, guilds and neighbourhood associations in Lille and Verona continued to be involved in political conflict. However, on the whole, their stake in the political process was so relatively minor that they were unlikely to be in a position to support insurgent coalitions. With guilds and parishes contained, prospective insurgents in these two cities could not rely on the type of infrastructure that their contemporaries in many other cities employed to engage in higher-level practices of conflict.

THE NATURE OF ACTION GROUPS

There is no evidence for any long-term factions in either Lille or Verona. The conflict between Burgundians and Armagnacs, which fuelled divisions in Liège and particularly Tournai, has not left any direct traces in the

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[45] On Jean du Flosq: AML, 375, fo. 41v; AML, 16143, fos. 13v–14v; ADN, B, 6281, 6287, 6289, 6295, 6297–8. On the 1409 convicts: AML, 16148, fo. 14r; AML, 16153, fos. 14v–15v; AML, 16154, fos. 16r–16v; AML, 16156, fo. 14v; AML, 16159, fo. 15r; ADN, B 6292, 6298–9, 6302. For gambling, see also Mehl, *Les jeux*, 313–74.

[46] 'pour la seurté et sauvement de nostre ville de Lille', AML, 8/109; AML, 373, fos. 12r, 62r; ADN, B, 1068, no. 182426. On the connections between political disorder and bans on gambling in Lille, see also Paresys, 'L'ordre en jeu', 544–51.

composition of political groups in Lille.[47] In Verona, there is no evidence for divisions between Guelfs and Ghibellines after the early fourteenth century.[48] There were, of course, attempts to form political coalitions in both cities, but in the absence of strong and pre-existing guilds, neighbourhood associations, or parties such efforts were often not successful. The main backbones of such coalitions were often families and family networks, which not only provided a restricted basis for insurgent coalitions, but were also generally weak political players because of the particular type of contado and state structures impinging on Lille and Verona.

For Verona, the role of family structures in coalitions is illustrated by the rebellion of May 1412, an ill-fated attempt to deliver Verona back to the della Scala family. After the uprising was put down by the Venetian *rettori*, with the help of other Veronese citizens, at least sixteen individuals were hanged, and more than thirty were banned. This insurgent coalition was a varied group, containing individuals as disparate as the chaplain don Pietro da San Giusto, the weaver Battista, the miller Giovanni Bertarino, and the spicer Zano del Mazzo. However, there is no indication of particular parish or guild support, and most chroniclers blamed the *popolo minuto* alone for involvement in the plot.[49] In any case, the only relatively major pre-existing power bases around which this coalition formed were those of the two patrician families of the da Quinto and Maffei, both of whom had been supporters of the della Scala regime and held resentments against Venice.[50] Giacomo Urbano, Benedetto, and Antonio da Quinto, who allegedly harboured a military captain in Verona, may have developed a grudge against Venice because the Republic only compensated them for part of a loan that their father had given to the della Scala, to which the da Quinto had been closely attached.[51] The most interesting involvement was

[47] See Chapter 5, p. 127; Chapter 6, pp. 164–7.

[48] Varanini, 'Nelle città della Marca Trevigiana', 569–71, 578–9.

[49] Sanudo, cols. 865–6; Zagata, 52; Dalla Corte, *Dell'istorie*, III, 8–10; Mitocoli, 'Parva cronica', 160; Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, It. VII 2048 (8331.1: 'Cronica di Antonio Morosini'), 688–91; Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, It. VII 788 (7293: 'Cronica anonima'), fo. 95r; British Library, Add. MS. 8577 ('Cronica di Venezia'), fos. 71v–72r. The best study of this uprising is Law, *Commune of Verona*, 320–32, published in 'Venice, Verona and the della Scala'.

[50] The *rettori* also accused Gabriele Capodiferro, both a Veronese and a Venetian citizen, of complicity, but he was cleared by the *Avogadori di Comun*: ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Lettere 666/2: 26 October 1412, 30 November 1412, 13 January 1413; ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Raspe, 3646/6, pt. III, fo. 15v.

[51] ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Raspe, 3646/6, pt. II, fos. 81r–81v; ASVen, Senato, Misti, 47, fo. 181r; ASVen, Senato, Secreti, 6, fo. 6v; Zagata, 54; Dalla Corte, *Dell'istorie*, III, 12. Note that Gasparre, Giorgio, and Silvestro da Quinto were acquitted: ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Raspe, 3646/6, pt. II, fos. 15v–16r. For the da Quinto, see also Law, *Commune of Verona*, 318–19.

that of the Maffei, who were banished to Crete by the Venetian authorities in the aftermath of the revolt. Their sentence was later queried by the Venetian appeals court of the *Avogadori di Comun*, but it is likely that the Maffei had been brought to this rebellion because of their longer record of opposition to Venetian rule.[52] As supporters of the one-year Carrara regime in Verona in 1404–5, the Maffei had already in January 1405 been identified as 'perfidious and capital enemies (*perfidi et capitales inimici*)' by the Senate.[53] They do not appear to have been able to reconcile themselves to the new Venetian regime. In 1406, they already stood accused of involvement in a rebellion, while there were rumours in 1407 that they were associating with Veronese insurgents in Bologna.[54] They were again suspected of dealings with the della Scala at the Council of Constance in 1414. It is clear that the Maffei alone could scarcely challenge Venetian rule, and the family reconciled itself with both Venice and Verona in the 1420s. By 1439, Guglielmo, Giacomo, and Rolandino Maffei were, however, reported to have again plotted against Venice with the marquis of Mantua.[55] Unlike the cross-cutting coalitions that were formed in cities such as Bologna or (more occasionally) Florence, the Veronese coalition of 1412 was a weak construct. It was not so much the product of negotiation between numerous political units in the city as an attempt by a few discontented families, possibly in alliance with some men from lower social orders, to settle old scores. This was not extraordinary in any late medieval city; yet what may be special about Verona is that associations of this type were virtually the only form of coalition that could be found. As a result, such coalitions almost entirely revolved around family interests, and failed to appeal to a broader section of the population.

A comparable case in Lille may be the family-based coalitions of the warring le Barre and Pouques families and their followers in the 1380s. In the confrontations between these coalitions, the le Barre family appears to have led a group of major office-holding families who between themselves

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[52] Zagata, 53; Sanudo, cols. 865–6; ASVer, AAC, 8, p. 18; ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Raspe, 3646/6, pt. II, fos. 30r–30v; ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Lettere, 666/2: 28 June 1413. For the Maffei, see also Law, *Commune of Verona*, 304–8, 330.

[53] ASVen, Senato, Misti, 58, fo. 6r. Venetian sources suggest that the Maffei were part of the embassy which the commune dispatched to Venice for the formal ritual of submission in July 1405: Sanudo, col. 822; *I libri commemoriali della Repubblica di Venezia*, lib. X, no. 5; however, this is not supported by the local Veronese documentation: Biadego, 'Dante e l'umanesimo veronese', 412–13; ASVer, AAC, 56, fo. 8r.

[54] ASVer, AAC, 56, fo. 8r; Sanudo, col. 834; Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, It. VII 2048 (8331.1: 'Cronica di Antonio Morosini'), 493–6.

[55] ASVen, Senato, Secreti, 6, fo. 19r; ASVen, Dieci, Deliberazioni miste, 12, fos. 130v, 182v–184r. Note the involvement of the Maffei in property disputes: ASVen, Avogaria di Comun, Raspe, 3646/6, pt. I, fos. 47r–47v, pt. II, fos. 2v–3r.

held 102 municipal offices between 1370 and 1390. They opposed a grouping headed by the noble Pouques family, lords of Mormont, who were associated with the Prémecque and the Arthus, another office-holding family in Lille. In 1382, these two groups violently clashed on an unspecified issue and one municipal officer of Lille, who also happened to be a member of the le Barre family, was wounded. According to the investigating comital officers this led to 'assemblies, uprisings, and commotions (*assemblees, emeutes et commotions*)' and 'rebellion and offence against the officers of the count, the *bailli*, and one sergeant'.[56] However, the family basis of these confrontations meant that they were ultimately governed by a family logic and, as the subsequent history of these conflicts reveals, by mechanisms of conflict resolution typical for disputes between families. Although it cannot be said for certain what the underlying causes of their animosity were, it looks likely that they centred on questions to do with family disputes over murder and *vendetta*: these could, of course, have a public dimension, but did not necessarily always touch on issues to do with the organization of political life.[57] After 1382, the le Barre were implicated in the death of an associate of the Pouques family, Hustin de Prémecque. In spite of a subsequent truce, Hustin's brother Jacquemart then retaliated by wounding Hennequin de le Barre in 1387. One year later, the le Barre and their associated families were condemned to found a chapel to commemorate the death of another member of the Prémecque family. It is not surprising that members of these families could be found in subsequent incidents involving the carrying of arms and attacks on other individuals, or that similar conflicts had already broken out in July 1388 between the le Preudhomme and Hangouart families.[58] It is well-known that the dukes of Burgundy were keen on curbing this type of violence, although, as elsewhere, this did not mean that such *vendetta*-type confrontations disappeared from Lille altogether in subsequent decades.[59]

Possible coalitions in Verona and Lille were further weakened by the fact that families' room for manoeuvre was arguably more restricted than in the other cities studied in this book. Even major families seem

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[56] 'rebellion et ofense contre les oficiers de monseigneur, meismement contre le bailif et un sergent', ADN, B, 18882, fos. 60r–60v. The families associated with the le Barre were the le Preudhomme, Hangouart, le Nepveu, Fremault, and le Vacquerie.

[57] On the conceptualization of *vendetta*, see Zorzi, 'La cultura della vendetta'.

[58] ADN, B, 1681, fos. 24r–24v, 37r–38v, 46r–46v. Especially the le Barre, le Nepveu, and le Preudhomme families were subsequently frequently involved in violent offences, including in 1409 against the Arthus: AML, 16138, fos. 12r–12v; AML, 16146, fo. 13v; AML, 16150, fos. 15r–15v; ADN, B, 6278–9, 6289, 6292, 6294, 6297, 6300–1.

[59] For instance, see the family war between the Mulier and le Riche families in 1412–14: AML, 66/1339, 32/698; AML, 16157, fo. 14v; AML, 15882, fos. 131r–131v. For family wars in this area, see Vale, 'Aristocratic Violence'.

to have lacked the autonomous bases of support in the contado or hinterland which rebels often enjoyed elsewhere. By the fifteenth century, Verona's contado was highly fragmented into numerous jurisdictions of varying, but generally relatively restricted, levels of autonomy. Three quarters of the contado were made up of vicariates of private individuals who had received these lands either by grant from the della Scala in the fourteenth century or by purchase from the liquidation of lands of the della Scala under the Milanese and Venetian regimes. Of these, about sixty enjoyed civil jurisdiction over their territories, but few disposed of major powers. An exception was the district of Sanguinetto between the Adige and Tartaro rivers, which was held under imperial grant by the dal Verme family who were mercenary captains in the service of Milan and later Venice. All this meant that while 22 of 347 Veronese office-holding families in 1400–40 can be found to have held private vicariates, they were mostly not as strong as those holding the bastions of the *montagna* or *pianura bolognese* which played such an important role in Bolognese political conflicts. Furthermore, although the commune had maintained its jurisdiction over the contado after the Venetian takeover, private vicariates obtained from liquidated della Scala lands depended on the Venetian *Camera Fiscale*, and the holders of such lands could mainly expect benefits from influencing Venetian, rather than only Veronese, policy.[60] In Lille, powerful land-holding regional players, such as the lords of Roubaix, had a base in the city, but often tended to be more involved in courtly than in urban politics. Families represented in municipal politics in Lille did also possess fiefs in the city's hinterland, but between 1370 and 1470 this only concerned about ten of which half made their acquisitions after 1440. It is significant that in Lille—which like other Franco-Flemish cities only possessed limited jurisdiction over its greater hinterland—these families frequently held fiefs from bodies other than the échevinage, such as the *Salle de Lille*, the *Château* of Lille, or the chapter of Saint-Pierre.[61]

The room for manoeuvre of Verona's and Lille's major families was further curtailed by their involvement in courtly or state politics, which in the context of the well-resourced Burgundian, Milanese, and Venetian states could represent a worthwhile addition to, or substitute for, city politics. The Fremault family in Lille, which alone amassed over nine fiefs in the first half of the fifteenth century, is a case in point. This family of wine merchants and money-changers was firmly based in Lille, where it held 102 municipal offices between 1375 and 1440. However, from about

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[60] Varanini, *Il distretto veronese*, 65–8, 183–9; Zamperetti, *I piccoli principi*, 121–48.
[61] Lecuppre-Desjardin, 'La noblesse à la conquête de la ville'; Casteur, *Les bourgeois à Lille*, 82–9.

1420 Lothar Fremault started moving into close proximity of the duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, to whom he started lending money. He was ennobled by the duke in 1426 and was eventually appointed to the *Chambre des Comptes*, the duke's accounting office. The Fremaults did not leave city politics—Lothar's son Philippe continued to hold communal office twenty-five times between 1444 and 1482—but their aspirations were now also orientated toward other power bases.[62]

Some of Verona's major families were also drawn into the service of Milan and Venice, although opportunities for office-holding, particularly in the Venetian state, were restricted by the special privileges held by Venetian patricians. Nevertheless, those families of Verona which did have a significant landed basis—the Malaspina, Nogarola, dal Verme, and Bevilacqua—came to serve Milan or Venice as military captains, and became regional political players in their own right for whom Verona was only one of several power bases.[63] The Bevilacqua, who held a total of eight contado jurisdictions in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, are a good example. After falling out with the della Scala regime in 1381, Guglielmo Bevilacqua joined the service of Milan and Venice, and played an important role in the conquests of Verona by these respective states in 1387 and 1405. Although local contacts were undoubtedly helpful on these occasions, Guglielmo acted more as a mercenary captain than as the leader of an urban faction: in 1387, he did not mobilize parts of the Veronese population, but principally relied on the co-operation of the city's Lombard guards who mutinied against the della Scala.[64] Guglielmo's sons also orientated themselves outside Verona: Francesco Bevilacqua was a supporter of Venice and married his children into the Collalto and Correr families, while Galeotto Bevilacqua became an agent of the duke of Milan. Galeotto and his children, who continued to hold properties in Verona's contado, maintained an interest in the city and, in 1439, they may have supported an attempt by the marquis of Mantua to conquer Verona. Testimony to the ultimately weakened position even of such major families, their efforts remained unsuccessful and the marquis's plans were quickly foiled.[65]

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[62] BML, MS 674; AML, 5/42, 132/2411–12; Frémaux, 'Histoire généalogique'; Dumolyn, *Staatsvorming en vorstelijke ambtenaren*, 163–4 and CD.

[63] Rondinini, 'La dominazione viscontea', 48–102; Mallett and Hale, *Military Organization*, 16, 18, 21–2, 25, 27–8, 38; Varanini, *Il distretto veronese*, 188–93. Note that Giovanni Nogarola was accused of plotting against the Serenissima in 1412: Law, *Commune of Verona*, 317–18.

[64] Zagata, 2–3; Dalla Corte, *Dell'istorie*, II, 300–3; Gatari, *Cronaca carrarese*, 301–2; 'Cronica de Verona', 344–5. For the Bevilacqua, see also Frizzi, *Memorie storiche*, 24–50; Varanini, *Il distretto veronese*, 108–9, 180, 188–93.

[65] ASVer, AAC, 9, fos. 159v–160r; ASVer, AAC, 10, fos. 156v, 164r, 218v; ASVen, Senato, Secreti, 6, fo. 75r; ASVen, Dieci, Deliberazioni miste, 12, fo. 69v. Guglielmo Bevilacqua, son of Francesco, was also alleged to have been implicated in the marquis of

THE FRAMEWORKS OF THE
BURGUNDIAN AND VENETIAN STATES

Lille and Verona both faced governments that were highly assertive. Contrary to the assumptions of many theories of state formation, this did not necessarily stimulate revolt. In Lille, the advent of the dukes of Burgundy as counts of Flanders had, as elsewhere in the county, led to a clear increase in ducal taxation on the city. Indeed, it shot up to an average of 18,236 *livres* (or a sensational average of fifty-five per cent of municipal expenditure) for the first years of the duke's reign in 1384–7, although this declined and fluctuated substantially over the following decades.[66] Similarly, Venice—breaking promises made in the pacts agreed on Verona's acquisition in 1405—imposed a higher fiscal burden on Verona, most notably by raising customs duties and imposing direct taxes (*dazia*) from 1417. By 1450, Verona and its contado were reported to have contributed 52,500 ducats to the Venetian state.[67]

At the same time, Lille and Verona both retained a certain degree of autonomy within the Burgundian and Venetian states. Lille, which had already maintained its urban privileges during its period under the French crown in 1305–69, saw its franchises confirmed by the counts of Flanders and dukes of Burgundy, who, on a number of occasions, also swore oaths to respect the city's liberties. This meant that a semi-autonomous municipal administration with its own jurisdiction and accounts was maintained and the citizens of Lille were guaranteed, at least in theory, immunity from comital prosecution. However, the count retained powers to appoint the commission which chose the échevinage, authorized all forms of urban taxation, and audited the city's accounts.[68] Verona's jurisdictional status within the Venetian state went considerably further, something that was owed to the city's long history as a commune, many of the traditions and privileges of which it had also preserved under the signoria of the della Scala regime. Under both Milanese and Venetian rule, Verona preserved important institutions like the *Domus Mercatorum* as well as the communal government itself, although all these bodies were slowly reshaped

Mantua's attempted takeover, but the Veronese urban government petitioned Venice to withdraw this accusation: ASVer, AAC, 58, fo. 166r.

[66] Clauzel, *Finances et politique*, 153–9; Clauzel, 'Le roi, le prince et la ville', 86–7.
[67] Law, *Commune of Verona*, 213–301; Sanudo, col. 963.
[68] Clauzel, *Finances et politique*, 43–55, 63–84; Desportes, 'Réceptions et inscriptions', 542–8; Maufroid, *Essai sur l'échevinage*, 82–116; Lorgnier, 'La juridiction privilégiée du magistrat'. For the oaths, see *Le livre Roisin: coutumier lillois*, 113–14; *Roisin: franchises, lois et coutumes*, 43.

in the context of the wider regional states in which they now needed to operate.[69]

The urban autonomy of Lille and Verona may have deflected some of the pressures on central government, but also represented a potential challenge. It has been seen in Chapters 5 and 6 that the retention of powerful political units always provided at least the possibility for an escalation of conflict, equipping political players with the necessary infrastructure to mount challenges against governments and other opponents. The existence of semi-autonomous power bases, as much as urban populations demanded it, also had to be contained. This happened in different ways in Lille and Verona, with significant differences for the remaining potential for possible escalations of conflict.

Lille: Blurring of Boundaries inside the City

In Lille, the danger of an escalation of conflicts was avoided because the formation of a coalition against the duke of Burgundy was ultimately very difficult. This was not only a result of the duke's frequent physical presence in the city, but also because of the particular framework of office-holding into which many of Lille's elite families were absorbed. As Jan Dumolyn has shown, the Burgundian state generally offered extensive possibilities of patronage for upwardly mobile patricians in the county of Flanders. Differently from many Italian cases, where the podestà and his officers were external to the city, office-holders in Flanders also maintained close links with urban society.[70] In Lille, this process may have been particularly accentuated, by comparison with other Flemish cities, because of the way in which the court and several ducal agencies were concentrated in the city. These bodies not only provided opportunities for office-holding, but were open to a patriciate that moved between the urban and ducal worlds. Boundaries between office-holders in ducal and municipal service were blurred, and the formation of rival parties either in support of or against the duke was discouraged.

The princely court of the duke of Burgundy and the urban population of Lille were naturally close. Calculated over his whole career, Philip the Good spent at least one day in six and, in specific years, up to six months in Lille. The duke's chief accounting office for his northern dominions,

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[69] See Varanini, 'Élites cittadine e governo dell'economia'; Law, 'Verona and the Venetian State'; Soldi Rondinini, 'La dominazione viscontea', 136–75. For similar patterns throughout the Veneto, see Varanini, 'Istituzioni, politica e società'; Law, 'Venetian Mainland State'.

[70] Dumolyn, *Staatsvorming en vorstelijke ambtenaren*, 15–68; Dumolyn, 'Les réseaux politiques locaux'. For similar observations on a later period, Cools, 'Le prince et la noblesse'.

the *Chambre des Comptes*, was also situated in Lille from 1386. The presence of both court and other princely institutions offered considerable possibilities for the urban economy, and it comes as no surprise that on several occasions Lille merchants were banned by the échevinage from raising prices at the arrival of the duke. Several members of the *Chambre des Comptes* got involved in urban life through the purchase of houses and rents, or by entering the urban marriage market.[71]

Lille and the dukes of Burgundy may thus have entertained particularly close relations, and this was also reflected in the possibilities for office-holding given to citizens of Lille in the prestigious *Chambre des Comptes*, which, alongside the Council of Flanders at Ghent, was the premier office-holding opportunity in Flanders. In the reigns of the dukes John the Fearless and Philip the Good, as many as six Lillois families had members who became officials in the *Chambre*.[72] Crucially for our purposes, all these families continued to hold municipal offices in Lille contemporaneously, and indeed members from these six families occupied a total of 142 municipal offices between 1370 and 1440.[73] The vast majority of these were held by Lothar Fremault's family. After Lothar had entered the *Chambre des Comptes* in 1428, members of his family continued to occupy an average of nearly two high-level municipal offices per year for the following decade. Other families had different paths of progression from a municipal to a ducal career. For instance, the Lanstais and à la Truie families moved more quickly from municipal to ducal office-holding. Barthélemy à la Truie, who had already entered ducal service as a clerk to the receiver of Artois, became a member of the *Chambre des Comptes* in 1411, only sixteen years after his father had entered the échevinage. By contrast, the Dommessent family rose

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[71] Sivéry, 'Histoire économique et sociale', 221–4; *Itinéraires de Philippe le Hardi et de Jean Sans Peur*, 674; *Itinéraires de Philippe le Bon et de Charles, comte de Charolais*, 517, 530. On the purchases of the duke in Lille, see ADN, B, 3371, which is partly summarized in *Inventaire sommaire des archives départmentales antérieurs à 1790: Nord*, VII, 356–9. On price rises, AML, 375, fo. 70r; AML, 376, fo. 125v. On the *Chambre des Comptes* and Lille, see Dumolyn, *Staatsvorming en vorstelijke ambtenaren*, 127, 141.

[72] The families are the Fremault, Lanstais, à la Truie, Dommessent, le Porte, and le Douche. All references concerning the *Chambre de Comptes*, unless otherwise stated, are in Dumolyn, *Staatsvorming en vorstelijke ambtenaren*, CD. On the Dommessent, see also AML, 16168, fo. 16r.

[73] Data on all municipal offices for this and the following paragraphs have been computed for 1370–1440 from BML, MS 674. The municipal offices are: échevinage (12 members), *rewart* (1), *voir-jurés* (4), *jurés* (8), *comtes de la Hanse* (4), *gard-orphènes* (4), *paiseurs* (4), and *Huit Hommes* (8). The duke of Burgundy annually appointed the commission which chose the échevins from those holding *bourgeoisie* in Lille, but the other colleges were chosen by the échevins or varying combinations of the other colleges. See Clauzel, *Finances et politique*, 67.

contemporaneously in the political circles of Lille and the court after only recently becoming citizens (*bourgeois*) of Lille. Vinchaut Dommessent became *bourgeois* in 1425 and started holding municipal offices from 1439, while his son Loys became ducal secretary from 1431 and entered the *Chambre des Comptes* in 1448.

The way in which the governance of Lille was organized also meant that a high number of local and lower-level ducal offices were available which could either be directly accessed by the patriciate of Lille or for which it was possible to work as officers or lieutenants. This included positions such as the *bailli* of Lille or the city's *prévôt*, but also offices more peculiarly connected to Lille's constitutional status, such as the *châtellain* of the *châtellenie* of Lille and the *souverain bailli* of Lille, Douai, and Orchies. In much the same way as for the *Chambre des Comptes*, the Lillois moved between municipal careers and such ducal offices. For instance, Jean le Viart held municipal office twelve times between 1401 and 1418—including the office of échevin on two occasions—and was then *prévôt* of Lille from 1420 to 1440.[74] Others followed a reverse path: Mahieu du Fresne was a sergeant of the *bailli* of Lille in 1401–5, acquired citizenship in Lille in 1415, and was then chosen as an échevin in 1425.[75] Considerable movement between such ducal offices and municipal office-holding was also normal for major families. The le Nepveu family held ninety-two municipal offices in 1370–1440, possessed five houses in Lille, and also entered ducal service, although they did not make it into the *Chambre des Comptes*. Jacques le Nepveu appears as a lieutenant of the *prévôt* in 1406–7, while his kinsman Pierre le Nepveu, who held twenty-five municipal offices between 1384 and 1410, became a lieutenant of the governor of Lille, Douai, and Orchies from 1410.[76] This latter office was also held by members of the Tenremonde family who, with seventy-nine municipal offices in 1370–1440, had a comparable political influence in Lille politics.[77] Similar observations could be made for the Gommer and Thieulaine, as well as for the smaller le Mesre and du Bus families.[78] It is striking that conflicts between the city of Lille and ducal institutions were often negotiated between office-holders who came from Lille. In 1431, for

[74] AML, MS 597, 89.
[75] AML, 56/1137; AML, 16159, fo. 14r; *Roisin: franchises, lois et coutumes*, 186–7.
[76] AML, 117/2132, 143/2686–7; AML, 15879, fo. 240v; *Roisin: franchises, lois et coutumes*, 187–9; Casteur, *Les bourgeois à Lille*, 95–7.
[77] Frémaux, 'Histoire généalogique', 16; De Ternas, 'Généalogie'.
[78] Gommer (holding office as *bailli*): ADN, B, 6234; Frémaux, 'Histoire généalogique', 15; AML, 66/1340. Thieulaine (*maître générale des monnaies*): Frémaux, 'Anoblissements et légitimations',141–2. Le Mesre (*lieutenant du prévôt*): *Roisin: franchises, lois et coutumes*, 184–5. Du Bus (*lieutenant du souverain bailliage, bailli de Saint-Pierre*): *Cartulaire de l'église collégiale de Saint-Pierre*, 847, 854, 871, 910, 919, 924, 932, 938, 947.

Table 7.2 Lille: Types of office held by members of families with marriage ties to the Fremault family (1380–1440)[a]

Families with marriage ties to the Fremault family (date of marriage)	Offices at the *Chambre des Comptes*	Ducal offices other than the *Chambre des Comptes*	Municipal offices at Lille
de Lanstais (1429)	X	X	X
de la Tannerie (1406)	X	X	—
de Tenremonde (1398, 1420)	—	X	X
le Nepveu (1402)	—	X	X
de Croix (1431)	—	X	X
de Rosimbois (1416)	—	X	—
de Douvrin (1420)	—	X	—
Descaubecque (1383)	—	—	X
le Monnoyer (1385)	—	—	X

[a] *Sources:* Frémaux, 'Histoire généalogique'; BML, MS, 597, 674, 797; Dumolyn, *Staatsvorming en vorstelijke ambtenaren*, CD; AML, 661340, 143/2686–7; ADN, B, 1082.

instance, the *bailli* of Lille, Hubert Gommer, twice cancelled the arrests of Lille citizens which had been carried out by his sergeants against urban prerogatives. Yet Gommer was no stranger to the city: altogether nine members of his family held municipal offices in Lille in 1370–1440, and Hubert himself had been a municipal office-holder seven times prior to becoming *bailli* in 1429.[79]

The boundaries between ducal and municipal office-holding were very fluid, and it is hard to see how distinct 'urban' or 'ducal' coalitions could have been formed in this city. Unfortunately, the surviving sources for Lille do not permit us to reconstruct the marriage patterns for most families, but those of the Fremault family are a good indicator of how overlapping networks were created there. Table 7.2 illustrates the varied types of offices held by members of those families to whom the Fremault were tied by marriage. Lothar Fremault certainly marked his social ascendancy by

[79] ADN, B, 6234; AML, 54/1096–7.

establishing marriage ties with families in ducal circles, such as the *Chambre des Comptes* family of the la Tannerie. In 1429, one year after Lothar entered the *Chambre des Comptes*, his sister was married into the Lanstais family who, like the Fremault themselves, were office-holders both in Lille and in high ducal service at the *Chambre*. The Fremault were, however, also related to families, such as the Tenremonde and the le Nepveu, who only occupied lower-ranking ducal offices, while also holding office in the city. They also married into other families, such as the Descaubecque, whose office-holding was concentrated in the municipality. Marriage ties did not always prevent greater divisions, but in the context of the office-holding framework and the blurred boundaries between municipality and ducal offices, it is hard to see how any lasting anti-ducal grouping could have been formed. This might not have applied to the lower reaches of society, which were left out of this patronage system. However, because these did not have the guild, parish, or party structures that would have allowed the organization of protest, it appears that Lille had become such a relatively atomized city that the duke of Burgundy did not need to fear any particularly deep-seated opposition.

Conflict between the city and the duke, of course, existed, but the Lillois mainly had to content themselves with formal petitions to the duke, some of which, on matters of taxation, also appear to have been successful.[80] However, given the lack of sustained structures of opposition, even the urban elites had little with which to threaten the duke. This is illustrated by an episode in May 1414 when John the Fearless imposed an unpopular direct tax (*taille*) on Lille, even though this type of taxation had been in disuse for many decades. The échevinage refused to levy it, denying that it had the authority to do so. Perhaps it was no coincidence that, in the same month, the city also refused to allow ducal officers to audit its accounts. We have no information on how this conflict continued, but many Lillois appear to have resorted to passive resistance, because a ducal order of August 1416 listed as many as 460 individuals—including from families such as the Fremault, Lanstais, le Nepveu, and Gommer—who simply had not paid the tax. Few other forms of protest were available to them, and such behaviour was undoubtedly going to be the subject of an investigation by the commission that the duke had instituted for a reform of the cities and *châtellenies* of Lille, Douai, and Orchies. However, it is not surprising that the dispute was eventually solved, when the duke exempted Lille from the commission's investigations in December 1416—in return, of course, for the payment of a tax of 600 *écus* by the city of Lille.[81]

[80] For instance, in 1388 and 1415 respectively: *Ordonnances de Philippe le Hardi, de Marguerite de Male et de Jean sans Peur*, I, 266–7; *Textes historiques sur Lille et le Nord*, 493–4.
[81] AML, 8/113, 125/2304; *Ordonnances de Jean sans Peur*, 296–7. For this episode, see also Clauzel, 'Les notables et la réforme'.

Verona: Affirmation of Boundaries between
Venice and Verona

In the Venetian state, a similarly blurred proximity between princely and urban officers did not exist. Offices belonging to the Venetian state, including those located in subject cities, were in the hands of Venetian patricians, while the mechanisms for the appointment of communal offices remained firmly in the hands of the commune.[82] The system of conflict in Verona did not rely on a blurring of boundaries between princely power and citizens within the city, but, by contrast, was characterized by an affirmation of boundaries between the city and the Serenissima. The city was not kept in check by preventing internal divisions, but through a system of petitioning which saw the commune of Verona, headed by the *Dodici* as its chief governmental body, acting as the chief conduit for the articulation of political grievances before Venetian authorities. An elaborate system of pacts (*capitula*) and formalized embassies between the capital and the subject city allowed a system in which conflict could be addressed and resolved in such quasi-judicial, but also highly politicized processes. Differently from Lille's system of conflict, this made greater levels of protest more easily possible, although escalations happened rarely.

The Venetian *terraferma* state was, to a greater extent than its Burgundian counterpart, built on the incorporation of highly autonomous communes. This went so far as allowing a plurality of legal systems, within an arrangement whereby equity jurisdiction played an important role in Venice, while the remainder of the *terraferma* was judged by a mixture of local statutes, customs, and Roman Law. Even appeal cases which had reached Venice were generally judged by local, not Venetian, legal standards.[83] Political exchanges between Venice and Verona were, at least in principle, governed by the *capitula* (pacts) struck between the Republic and the commune, and remained an important point of reference for their relations until Napoleon's conquest. Eleven *capitula*, negotiated immediately in the wake of the city's submission to Venice between 22 and 23 June 1405, confirmed the existing jurisdiction and constitution of the commune of Verona, reserved office-holding to Veronese citizens, and fixed taxes at their existing level.[84] In the wake of the takeover, as well as in later references to it, both sides were keen on stressing the apparently voluntary hand-over of power through existing communal institutions. In a letter to

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[82] Law, 'Venetian Mainland State', 167–73; Viggiano, 'Il dominio da terra', 549–53.

[83] Cozzi, *Repubblica di Venezia e stati italiani*, 217–318; Varanini, 'Gli statuti delle città della terraferma'; Mazzacane, 'Lo stato e il dominio', 596–7; Viggiano, *Governanti e governati*, 64–79, 86–9.

[84] The *capitula* are in *Statutorum Civitatis Verone*, 391–7.

the podestà of Treviso on 24 June, the doge Michele Steno reported that Venetian troops had entered Verona with the full consent of the Veronese citizens. On 28 June and 3 July, the Veronese convoked a *Maior et Generalis Concilium*, which ceded 'full, true, and general dominion, all jurisdiction, power, and authority (*plenum, verum et generale dominium, omnimodam iurisdictionem, potestatam et bayliam*)' to the Republic and formulated further demands concerning financial arrangements. On 16 July, the Senate confirmed the eleven originally negotiated *capitula* in a golden bull, and issued another golden bull concerning five further demands which the Veronese had made, but which the Serenessima only accepted in part. The process whereby the *capitula* had been negotiated provided the framework for relations between the capital and its subject city for decades to come. Although Verona had stripped itself of its powers, it had affirmed its enduring corporate identity within the Venetian state.[85]

The crucial issue was not so much the promises made by Venice, which were not altogether more generous than those made by Milan in similar pacts in 1387, and were in any case not always kept.[86] What the *capitula* did, and had largely failed to do under Milan, was to set in motion a process by which formalized embassies of the commune would, frequently on the basis of the pacts themselves, regularly petition the Venetian Senate. Already on 19 February 1407, the Senate resolved to instruct Venetian *rettori* to uphold the *capitula* in the newly conquered territories of Verona, Vicenza, and Padua because several petitions had appealed to the Serenessima over alleged infringements.[87] Taxation and other burdens, which Venice had promised not to change, were always going to be the subject of contention. Only three months after the uprising of May 1412, the *Dodici* despatched an embassy led by the two jurists Nicola da Brenzono and Guglielmo della Pigna to Venice to complain against the heavy fiscal burden in very clear terms. They were to tell the Signoria that Verona was not as strong as it used to be under the regimes of the della Scala or Milan, and that fiscal demands had become simply 'unbearable and impossible (*insupportabile et impossibile*)'. The city was 'in the poorest of conditions (*in pauperrimo statu*)' and while taxes had to come down,

[85] Verci, *Storia della Marca Trivigiana e Veronese*, XVIII, no. 2046; Biadego, 'Dante e l'umanesimo veronese', 420. Note that some additional demands were rejected by the Senate and did not make it into the golden bull: ASVen, Senato, Secreti, 2, fos. 127r–127v. Verona's communal identity was also stressed in the official submission of the Veronese on 12 July in Venice: Sanudo, cols. 822–3.

[86] *Documenti dell'antico dialetto veronese (1331–1475)*, 25–8. For the *capitula* between subject communities and states, see De Benedictis, 'Consociazioni e "contratti di signoria"'; Menniti Ippolito, 'La dedizione di Brescia'.

[87] ASVen, Senato, Secreti, 3, fo. 55v.

the contado, clerics, and nobles also had to pay a fairer share.[88] The Senate did prompt the *rettori* to act on the issue of clerical taxation and, in 1413, temporarily suspended the much-hated salt tax, only to reintroduce it in an even harsher form a year later and to tax everyone over the age of three. On 6 September 1414, the Veronese dispatched another embassy to warn the Senate 'not to engage in this inhumane act which only tyrants would commit' and to point out that under the della Scala and Milan the salt tax had only been levied on individuals over the age of six. The Senate granted the petition, but, needless to say, this was not the last time discontent over taxation was to be voiced in this way.[89]

The embassy system was also a crucial, if not always effective, means of negotiation to resolve conflicts between the Serenissima and groups within Verona. This was particularly relevant in the late 1430s and early 1440s, when the Venetian government suspected that numerous citizens aided the marquis of Mantua in conquering Verona for three days in November 1439 until Venetian troops under the command of Francesco Sforza were able to regain the city. Before and after the presumed revolt, Veronese citizens—according to one Venetian report, as many as 110—had left the city and allegedly came to collaborate with the marquis. Historians have rightly questioned the truthfulness of Venetian allegations in this regard, although they were certainly expressive of unresolved tensions between the city and Venice.[90] From September 1439, even before the marquis's conquest, a steady stream of embassies from the commune pleaded with a number of political agencies in Venice to rehabilitate those who had left the city and permit them to return. The Venetian authorities showed themselves reluctant to clear possible enemies of the Serenissima, although the evidence of most chroniclers and even the investigations of Venetian *rettori* suggest that many of the citizens had only left Verona because of an outbreak of plague and war, and had unwittingly ended up in the marquis's lands.[91] Whatever

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[88] ASVer, AAC, 56, fos. 206r–207r, 209r–209v.

[89] 'non facere illam inhumanitatem, quam tiranj voluerint facere', ASVen, Senato, Misti, 50, fo. 153v. On these taxes, Law, *Commune of Verona*, 220–3, 272–4.

[90] Most chroniclers did not mention the direct collaboration of Verona, but did remark on the passivity of the Veronese in the wake of the conquest: Sanudo, col. 1084; Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, It. VII 788 (7293: 'Cronica anonima'), fos. 182r–182v; Zagata, 66; *Parte inedita della cronica di anonimo veronese*, 30–1. Two chroniclers claimed that Veronese citizens actively co-operated with the marquis: *Parte inedita della cronica di anonimo veronese*, 94–5; Cristoforo da Soldo, *La cronaca*, 38–40. On the individuals under investigation by Venice, see ASVen, Dieci, Deliberazioni miste, 12, fos. 75r, 182v–184r. On these events, see the critical remarks in Law, *Commune of Verona*, 333–50; Varanini, 'Verona ai primi del Quattrocento', 23–44.

[91] On September 1439, ASVer, AAC, 11, fos. 1r–2r. On suspects who had abandoned the city, *Parte inedita della cronica di anonimo veronese*, 26, 94; ASVen, Senato, Secreti, 14, fo. 153v; ASVer, Rettori Veneti, 8, fo. 172r.

the precise truth of the absconding citizens' political persuasions, the communal authorities of Verona continued to intervene on the presumed rebels' behalf, and it is a demonstration of the robustness of the embassy system that the commune could interfere with such a delicate matter, although it took some time for Venice to agree to their demands. By August 1441 at least four embassies had been despatched, all of which were unsuccessful. The Veronese were already about to call back their ambassadors when, on 10 August 1441, the Venetian *Consiglio dei Dieci* finally conceded that all suspected rebels could appear in Venice and clear their names. However, another embassy was needed before the *Dieci*, in February 1442, published a list of the exiles who were allowed to travel to Venice. A substantial number of individuals then appear to have been cleared, but the commune of Verona continued to push further and, after another embassy, the *Dieci* agreed to clear further suspects by December 1442, although they did make the Veronese ambassadors wait for a whole month until they were received. While most exiles appear to have been cleared by 1443, further embassies on this matter were despatched in 1445 and 1454.[92]

The institutionalized relationships between Venice and the commune through the latter's embassies were not always successful, not least because of the haphazard politics of the various Venetian political agencies themselves. However, what matters is that this process existed, and that the commune used it to channel discontent or other political tensions in Verona. This system increasingly became the central axis of relations between Venice and Verona, and petitioning emerged as the central practice of conflict between these two political poles. Inside the city, it also considerably strengthened the role of the commune, because other corporate bodies can be found addressing the Serenissima with increasing rarity.[93] Unlike the system of conflict at Lille, that of Verona institutionalized and channelled, but did not seek to undermine, conflict. Indeed, Verona's system of conflict did not altogether remove the possibility for insurgent coalitions to form, because it did not interfere in the same way with the system of alliances that the Burgundian state was able to manipulate. This may explain why it was actually possible to organize some collective resistance against

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[92] ASVer, AAC, 11, fos. 14v–15r, 29v–30r, 36r–44v, 55v; ASVer, AAC, 58, fos. 59v, 154r, 185r; ASVer, AAC, 59, fo. 105r; ASVer, AAC, 60, fo. 183v; ASVen, Dieci, Deliberazioni miste, 12, fos. 86v–87r, 97r–97v, 119v; ASVen, Senato, Secreti, 15, fos. 3r–3v.

[93] For exceptions see ASVen, Senato, Misti, 47, fos. 82v–83r (*Domus Mercatorum*); ASVer, AAC, 9, fo. 42v (*Collegio dei Giudici e Avvocati*). This can be contrasted with the situation under the della Scala regime, discussed in Varanini, '"Al magnifico e possente segnoro"'. For petitions under Milan, see Galli, 'La dominazione viscontea', 494–5; Soldi Rondinini, 'La dominazione viscontea', 199–200; *La politica finanziaria dei Visconti*, II, 193–4.

Venice, although the overall weight of the system of conflict meant that such attempts were rarely successful.

On the whole, the systems of conflict of Verona and Lille left few possibilities for potential insurgents to engage realistically in urban warfare. Even in situations of external warfare, which in other cities so easily triggered divisions and political volatility, both cities remained remarkably consistent within their established patterns of conflict. In Verona, the military takeovers of 1387, 1404, and 1405 did not involve substantial internal divisions, and instead saw the commune of Verona engaging in the relatively peaceful negotiation and transfer of power.[94] Later geo-political crises such as the marquis of Mantua's attempted conquest of Verona in 1439, in the wake of a catastrophic war between Milan and Venice, may only have led to the formation of a ramshackle coalition in Verona, the core membership of which probably just involved the nine individuals whom the Venetian government refused to clear by 1443.[95]

   Lille found itself on a fault-line of the Hundred Years War, and yet there is little evidence to suggest that the city saw any divisions of the kind which Tournai witnessed between supporters of the duke of Burgundy and those of the dauphin of France. This does not mean that political players in Lille did not at various points try to exploit the duke's geo-political entanglements for their benefit or blindly associated themselves with him. The Lillois, like the Tournaisiens, appear to have had reservations about swearing an oath to the Treaty of Troyes of May 1420, which sealed the union between England and France under the auspices of the duke of Burgundy. Having first received notification of the treaty in July 1420, the Lillois still had not sworn the oath by the autumn and, on 28 October, representatives of the city were summoned to the *souverain bailli* of Lille, Douai, and Orchies, Hue de Lannoy, who threatened that any refusal to swear the oath would be punished with imprisonment and the confiscation of property. Still somewhat reticent, the Lillois responded that they would first wish to consult with the other cities of Flanders, but Hue again exhorted them to be 'obedient as his good subjects (*obeissants comme ses bonnes subgès*)'. At this point, the representatives of Lille gave in and declared that 'given the said constraint (*actendi la dicte contrainte*)', they would consent to the oath being sworn. In the ordinary circumstances of Lille politics they also had little other choice. Indeed, they soon reverted to necessary political practice and gave sixteen *lots* of wine to the commissioners of the duke of Burgundy and eight *lots* to Hue de Lannoy.[96]

[94] See this chapter, pp. 170–2.   [95] ASVen, Dieci, Deliberazioni miste, 12, fo. 130v.
[96] The case is in AML, 8/120. For the gifts, AML, 16164, fos. 45v–46r. For Tournai, see Chapter 1, p. 27.

This last episode clearly characterizes the logic of the system of conflict analysed in this chapter. The cities as a whole and groups within them did try to bring themselves into the political process, and protest was a feature in the urban politics of either city. To voice their grievances and discontent, political players operated through a number of channels, whether these were forms of low-level resistance, the judicial system, or a variety of other mechanisms. It would perhaps be mistaken to think of the Veronese or the Lillois as any more 'peaceful' or 'loyal', or any less prone to engagement in conflict than their contemporaries in other cities. However, potential rebels, such as the Maffei of Verona or the tax-strikers of Lille, found that very few possibilities existed to embark on revolt, when the cities lacked strong pre-existing guilds, parishes, and parties, and found themselves subject to a state structure which contained the effects of polycentricity. City dwellers in Verona and Lille had to resort to more hidden or more controlled political channels to advance their aims. Conflict was less violent in Lille and Verona, but it was far from absent. When they left their military banners at home, the inhabitants of these cities ultimately acted within the logic of their system of conflict.

Conclusion

This book is a political history written around the phenomenon of conflict in cities. Contention about the organization of public life lay at the heart of urban politics in Italy and the Southern Low Countries in the late Middle Ages. Different strategies of legitimation, modes of conflict, and action groups crystallized around the conduct of conflict in ways which often varied considerably from city to city. Distinct political systems developed around particular patterns of conflict: Bologna and Liège were characterized by especially volatile systems of conflict in which revolt and urban warfare played a crucial role amidst a dense, but constantly shifting, framework of political units; Florence and Tournai featured constitutional systems of conflict in which city dwellers bargained through and manipulated the relatively regularized constitutional mechanisms that had grown in their cities over time, but could also build on them to engage in revolt, if not very frequently; Lille and Verona possessed contained systems of conflict in which diverse forms of protest predominated in the context of altogether less varied and more controlled organizational structures. Conflict was, therefore, expressive and constitutive of a polycentric form of political organization which continued to characterize urban politics throughout this period. The crucial question is how the concentration of conflict in urban political systems can be squared with two major narratives of late medieval European history: first, the progressive consolidation of a state-controlled political order which has been seen as a hallmark of this period; second, the distinctness of European cities in world history.

Interpretations of state-building have largely ignored the fragmentation of cities, and have only recently (again) taken seriously the pluralist character of pre-modern states as a whole.[1] To be sure, cities have featured extensively in major theories of state-building, but they have usually been interpreted as the handmaidens of state growth and were understood as unitary, rather

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[1] See the Introduction, pp. 3–7 for the historiography.

than polycentric, entities. For Charles Tilly and Wim Blockmans, a medieval dialectic between European cities and governments led in the early modern and modern periods to the growth of national states which relied on capital supplied by the former as well as on coercion provided by the latter. This process was driven by inter-state warfare, and conflicts in urban arenas played no fundamental role.[2] In Perry Anderson's history of the 'absolutist' state, it was class conflict which acted as a crucial engine of state growth, but cities were again seen as curiously homogeneous bodies which furthered particular forms of statehood. In Anderson's view, the bourgeoisie of the strong and wealthy cities in Western Europe struck a mutually beneficial alliance with royal power, thereby contributing to and benefiting from the rise of a mild form of absolutism in the early modern period. The cities of Eastern Europe were too weak to resist the power of centralizing monarchies and, therefore, found themselves quashed by a more extreme version of absolutism.[3]

Particular urban groups often drove the growth of governmental apparatuses, but the complexity of cities meant that these often remained a challenge to rulers. This is most apparent during the better-studied and better-documented episodes of revolt, but this book suggests that dramatic escalations of violence were usually only the pinnacle of multi-faceted urban systems of conflict. These existed in parallel to, and were linked with, the wider polities in which they were situated and whose political processes were also affected by the fragmented cities within them. Even in regions which were substantially less urbanized than Italy and the Southern Low Countries, urban systems of conflict affected the wider political order. In many parts of late medieval Europe, civil wars or region-wide rural protests which undermined efforts of state control intersected with varying levels of division between different centres of power in urban arenas, which added further dimensions to already complicated patterns of political allegiance as well as contributing financial, military, and legal resources over which to fight.

Historians of the Wars of the Roses (1455–88) have recently found that many English cities were divided between Lancastrian and Yorkist supporters who sought to use the financial and military resources of their cities in support of the contending national parties. Yorkist factions may already have developed in Bristol and London during the 1450s, but they often only crystallized visibly after King Edward IV asserted his claim to the throne in 1460.[4] The disintegration of the kingdom of Bohemia in the

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[2] Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States*, 1–37; see the typology proposed in Blockmans, 'Voracious States and Obstructing Cities', 226–41.

[3] Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, 20–4, 204–6, 218.

[4] Fleming, 'Politics and the Provincial Town', 81–90; Bolton, 'City and the Crown', 15–20. For an argument which stresses London's unity in the face of the wars, see Barron, 'London and the Crown', 93–100. Eliza Hartrich, who I would like to thank for these

wake of the Hussite wars (1419–35) was itself a quasi-civil war—under-cut by religious divisions between Catholics, moderate Hussites, radical Taborites, and other groups—in which cities played a major role. The leadership of Prague was crucial in the early phases of the war and long-standing divisions in that city gave rise to various new coalitions. Many decades of competition between Czechs and Germans over the control of the urban government directly fed into divisions between Czech Hussites and German Catholics. Prague itself was split into the two jurisdictionally separate entities of the Old Town and the New Town: radicals organized in the New Town, while the Old Town was divided because of the presence of the university, the masters of which tended to be moderates. Two major revolts, in July 1419 and June 1421, led by the preacher Jan Želivský, sought to stir the inhabitants of Prague into a more radical attitude, but an Old Town coalition of university masters and burghers was eventually able to defeat the radicals and to direct Prague away from the Taborites for the remainder of the wars.[5] One large-scale conflict which laid bare the divisions of urban arenas most clearly was the German Peasants' War (1525), which was most keenly fought in the relatively highly urbanized region of South-West Germany. As Tom Scott has shown in his analysis of more than one hundred cities, a range of possible coalitions underlay the dynamics of the war. Some cities supported or rejected co-operation with peasant armies, but the urban governments of at least a third of the cities were forced into informal pacts or formal brotherhoods with peasant armies in the context of struggles between urban oligarchies and other groups, especially low-ranking guildsmen. Scenarios could range from a case of modest support such as Memmingen, whose town council was forced to feed the peasant army and supply it with arms after a guild uprising, to the spectacular one of Heilbronn, where two distinct groups of moderate and radical urban reformers pushed a particularly oligarchical town council to enter a formal treaty of brotherhood with the peasants. As Scott has stressed, the coalitions of the Peasants' War were the result of differently negotiated triangular relationships between lords, peasants, and craftsmen and are, therefore, indicative of a multiplicity of cross-cutting divisions which existed within the political landscape of South-West Germany.[6]

references, has uncovered hostile urban factions in several English cities in her Oxford DPhil thesis.

[5] Kaminsky, 'Prague Insurrection', 108–20; Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution*, I, 392–428, II, 1002–6, 1173–97. For similar observations on Wrocław in Silesia and Jihlava in Moravia, where comparable divisions led to different outcomes at a later point in the conflict, Heyman, 'City Rebellions'. For the role of cities more generally, Heyman, 'Role of the Bohemian Cities'.

[6] Scott, 'South-West German Towns', 151–2. For these alliances see also Blickle, *Revolution of 1525*, 105–20; Sea, 'Imperial Cities and the Peasants' War', 9–26. The control

To be sure, large-scale conflicts such as these frequently led to a greater consolidation of polities and to greater coordination between their constituent parts.[7] However, they also laid bare political systems, such as those of cities, which often continued to exist below, alongside, or enmeshed with the state-controlled political order with which historians have been most concerned. In Italy and the Southern Low Countries, the particular density of large cities with multiple cross-cutting divisions made the existence and relevance of urban political systems especially evident. The accumulation of fragmented urban arenas in these regions underlay large-scale conflicts, which recurred particularly frequently and posed a challenge to governments. Many of the cases of urban conflict studied in this book were, in fact, connected to each other and indicative of concentrated contention that affected entire regions. The War of the Eight Saints (1375–8) saw not only confrontations between the pope and cities of the Papal State, but many divisions within cities which both fuelled the war and were at the same time deepened by it. Two of the most spectacular urban revolts in the late Middle Ages, Bologna's revolt against the papal legate (1376) and the Ciompi revolt of Florence (1378), would have been unthinkable without the disaggregation of political bonds in Central Italy in this period.[8] Political conflicts in the Southern Low Countries were also bound up with the civil war between Burgundians and Armagnacs (*c.*1405–20) and the ensuing war between Lancastrian and Valois France (1420–35). The most prominent instance of this is the revolts of Tournai in the 1420s, which were caused by, but also further fed into, larger geo-political fissures. From the beginning of the wars, John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy, had in fact been concerned that conflicts might escalate in the complicated urban landscape of the Southern Low Countries. In 1406 and 1407, he moved quickly to suppress manifestations of discontent by guilds in Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres. In October 1408, he led a major international coalition to defeat the Hédroit rebels of Liège who had themselves received minor support from the duke of Orléans. The duke of Burgundy's intervention is all the more remarkable, because Liège lay outside his jurisdiction, but John was anxious, as he explained in letters to French ambassadors, that the Liège revolt

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of cities over their hinterland itself generated some of the grievances of the rebels, although this did not stop coalitions of convenience across the urban-rural divide: Scott, *Freiburg and the Breisgau*, 190–235; Kießling, *Die Stadt und ihr Land*, 775–84.

[7] Watts, *Making of Polities*, 340–52.

[8] For Florence, see Chapter 3, pp. 75–7. For Bologna, see Chapter 5, pp. 125–6. See also Gherardi, 'La guerra dei fiorentini'; Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, 85–6.

could be the 'beginning of universal rebellion (*commencement de rebel-
lion universelle*)'.[9]

The presence of so many major cities made Italy and the Southern Low
Countries prone to large-scale disintegration in the decades to follow. The
Flemish revolt in reaction to Maximilian of Habsburg's centralizing poli-
cies (1482–92), the Italian Wars prompted by several foreign invasions
(1494–1559), and the Dutch Revolt (1566–1648) all involved similarly
multi-dimensional lines of confrontation: many of these conflicts were not
only clashes between subject communities and states, but also involved inter-
nal splits within urban arenas which further strained the political balance
within these regions.[10] All this made the building of a state-controlled politi-
cal order difficult in Italy and the Southern Low Countries. Governments
were able to assert themselves, but they had constantly to engage with the
many competing forces which continued to characterize politics in these
urban belts throughout the late Middle Ages. The cities studied in this
book reflected this reality. They were governed by a corporatist framework
of guilds, neighbourhoods, and comparable institutions, although their
role varied considerably from city to city. Various kinds of factions were an
acknowledged part of political processes in at least four of them, while there
is also evidence for divisions in Lille and Verona. Insufficient control of their
hinterland generated diverse levels of volatility for all the cities except argu-
ably Verona. Negotiations on the basis of formal pacts, through powerful
estates, or by various other channels of negotiation constituted the frame-
work of relationships between subject cities and central governments. It is
not surprising that, when they could, some rulers were keen on uprooting
the pluralism of political units which underlay these systems of conflict. In
the 1530s, Emperor Charles V, who had to face up to urban politics in both
the Southern Low Countries and Italy, played a part in the dismantling of
urban and corporatist institutions in Ghent and, less directly, in Florence.[11]

Acknowledging the fragmentation of cities not only requires adjustments
to narratives of state formation, but also questions a long tradition of schol-
arship, stretching back to Max Weber, which has singled out the uniqueness

[9] Monstrelet, I, 352–3. For Tournai, see Chapter 6, pp. 164–7. For Liège, see Chapter 5,
pp. 127–8. See also Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 24–7, 49–66; Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les
Bourguignons*.
[10] See Boone and Prak, 'Rulers, Patricians and Burghers'; Haemers, 'Factionalism and
State Power'; Blockmans, 'Autocratie ou polyarchie?'; Chittolini, 'Milan in the Face of the
Italian Wars'; Arcangeli, 'Aggregazioni fazionarie e identità cittadina'; Arcangeli, 'Milan dur-
ing the Italian Wars'; Varanini, 'La terraferma di fronte alla sconfitta'; Brown, 'Revolution
of 1494'; Shaw, 'Politics and Institutional Innovation'; Weis, *Des villes en révolte*; Arnade,
Beggars, Iconoclasts and Civic Patriots; Boone, 'The Dutch Revolt and the Medieval Tradition'.
[11] For Ghent, see Dambruyne, 'Stedelijke identiteit en politieke cultuur'; Arnade, *Realms
of Ritual*, 196–209. For Florence, see von Albertini, *Das florentinische Staatsbewusstsein*,
179–200; Marrara, 'I rapporti giuridici'. See also Boone and Demoor, *Charles V in Context*.

of European cities in world history. In ways that were said to be especially pronounced in Italy and the Southern Low Countries in the Middle Ages, European cities have long been seen as cohesive and autonomous associations which were ruled by self-appointed governments and gave rise to peculiarly Western historical trajectories, such as state growth or the development of capitalism. By contrast, in Weber's influential view, non-European cities seemed so fragmented into clan and caste loyalties that they could not be said to constitute political entities at all.[12] The conclusions of the last few decades of research mean that this paradigm cannot be upheld. Urban governments were an important and possibly unique feature of European cities, but they presided over complex arenas in which many units vied for power and influence. Far from being the manifestations of unitary collectivities, city governments were one of the targets of conflicts in urban arenas, and they were themselves controlled by the various political groups that organized around multiple urban structures of power. As historians have discovered, European cities actually resembled other cities in the 'pre-modern' world in distributing many functions of governance and public organization among neighbourhoods, economic associations, religious bodies, and other units. Polycentricity can, therefore, be considered as much a hallmark of European cities as of other cities around the globe.[13]

Major cities throughout the pre-modern world were often characterized by elevated levels of conflict, but the nature and impact of such conflicts depended on the wider political framework within which cities were situated. Urban political conflict had particularly important consequences when it took place in capital cities. In Sengoku Japan (1467–1615), the capital Kyoto did not only become an arena for the conduct of conflict between rival military households in a long-lasting civil war (1467–1568), but urban religious sects, guilds, and neighbourhoods also became embroiled. This could take unusual forms, such as outright warfare between two Buddhist sects in the early 1530s, the rurally-based Ikkō and the more urban Hokke. The latter participated in processions (known as *uchimawari*) against Ikkō sanctuaries and temples in which they chanted the mantras of Hokke congregations, waved white banners, and carried torches possibly lit from sacred fire.[14] In Song China (960–1276) and Ming China (1368–1644), cities were

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[12] Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 727–814 (at 727–41). Published in English as Weber, *The City*. For the influence of Weber's views on twentieth-century scholarship, see Bruhns and Nippel, *Max Weber und die Stadt*, especially the contributions by Bruhns, Breuer, and Dilcher.

[13] Friedrichs, 'What made the Eurasian City Work?'; Clark, *Oxford Handbook of Cities in World History*, 264–72, 281–6, 297–306, 321–3, 335–8, 421–38.

[14] Berry, *Culture of Civil War*, 148–67, 225–39; Hayashiya, 'Kyoto in the Muromachi Age', 28–34. For the cities of late medieval Japan, which have been interpreted as exercising

subsumed into the political structures of a largely agrarian empire, but historians have recently uncovered the complexity of urban life in Chinese cities and the degree to which it was characterized by distinct political dynamics. Political conflict in these cities had particularly relevant repercussions in China's most urbanized regions. Between 1550 and 1600, several of the great cities of the densely settled Yangtze Delta became the sites of large-scale protests, which were provoked by the grievances of urban populations about their systems of neighbourhood obligations. In China's secondary capital Nanjing, this discontent manifested itself in the petitioning undertaken by urban groups, but in Hangzhou protests escalated into a major uprising in May 1582, which was partly organized on the basis of the very neighbourhood watch system (*baojia*) which the rebels wanted to see reformed.[15]

Political conflicts in cities were arguably most problematic for polities that were situated in highly urbanized regions. In the major cities of the Mamluk Empire (1250–1517)—Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo—varied forms of conflict ranging from protests to major urban warfare crystallized around diverse types of neighbourhood organization, markets, Sufi fraternities, and patronage networks of mosque complexes.[16] Damascus, in particular, proved an especially volatile city throughout the late Middle Ages and the early modern period. Rebel groups frequently clustered around the city's four largest suburbs, al-Ṣāliḥiyya, Maydān al-Ḥaṣā, al-Qubaybāt, and al-Shāghūr, to foment warfare. Such neighbourhoods were treated as fiscal and judicial units by governments, but they also had their own forms of organization. These manifested themselves, for instance, in fighting gangs known as *zuʿr*, who organized price rackets among merchants and artisans, but also sometimes led neighbourhood resistance against tax collectors and other officials associated with the Mamluk state.[17] In spite of various attempts at suppression, local troops (*yerlīyya*) associated with the

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a degree of self-management alongside other structures of governance, see McClain, 'Japan's Pre-Modern Urbanism', 329–32; Wakita, 'Dimensions of Development'.

[15] Fuma, 'Late Ming Urban Reform', 56–62, 77; von Glahn, 'Municipal Reform and Urban Social Conflict'; Fei, *Negotiating Urban Space*, 29–75. Although urban forms of political organization in these cities were often closely entwined with the state, Chinese historians now stress that they could be appropriated by city dwellers in various ways: Wakeman, 'Boundaries of the Public Sphere'; Naquin, *Peking*, 215–48; Fei, *Negotiating Urban Space* 20–7, 248–9. For introductions to cities in Song and Ming China, De Weerdt, 'China: 600–1300'; Rowe, 'China: 1300–1900'.

[16] Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 85–115, 153–83; Elbendary, *Faces in the Crowd*, 106–48 and passim; Raymond, *Grandes villes arabes*, 129–40, 214–27; Raymond, 'Urban Networks and Popular Movements'. For remarks on how to conceptualize such political units in the Islamic world, see Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership*, 1–7, 169–74; Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, 11–29, 127–77.

[17] See, for instance, these suburbs' involvement in urban warfare in 1389–90, 1497, and 1501: Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *A Chronicle of Damascus*, II, 33–5, 59–60, 78–9, 82–3; Ibn Ṭūlūn,

same neighbourhoods remained vehicles of protest in Damascus into the Ottoman period.[18] Of course, the meaning and dynamics of conflicts in such cities differed substantially from those of their European counterparts, but it is striking that rebels often acted within existing political and legal frameworks. In addition to imitating Mamluk political customs and procedures, rebels in Damascus also frequently appropriated Islamic practices to justify their claims, thereby acknowledging the particular role which Islam and Islamic law played in the organization of public life. They used mosques and minarets as their preferred locations of protest, staged or refused collective prayers, often engaged in such collective activities on Fridays, chanted *Allāhu Akbar*, and carried the banners of mosques. Although Islamic law was interpreted by most contemporary scholars as condemning disobedience against rulers, rationales were also developed under which resistance could be legitimated, including in cases of tyranny (*ẓulm*).[19]

Polycentric cities were not sites of chaos. However, the political order to which they gave rise does not fit the expectations which we bring from our own political realities. Many societies, including perhaps the majority of societies outside the modern Western world, work in unfamiliar ways: conflict in such societies has often been misunderstood as a deviation from normal patterns of interaction, but it would merit consideration outside categories of order and disorder. This is also true for the political systems of cities in late medieval Italy and the Southern Low Countries, which had their own logic—a logic that had grown over many centuries and often stretched back to the period of demographic expansion in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when many of the diverse forms of political organization in cities had come into existence. In such a context, an entire repertoire of discourses, practices, and forms of association crystallized around the conduct of conflict in ways which varied from city to city, but constituted an essential feature of political life in all of them. This logic was an expression of a distinct form of organization which manifested itself in different systems crystallizing around the negotiation of conflict in cities. It was but the logic of their political order itself.

Mufākahat, I, 185–96, 199–200, 247–52; Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Iʿlām*, 82–9, 141–4. Of 111 reports of *zuʿr* activity in Damascus between 1484 and 1516 as many as 67 were linked to the four suburbs in question: Miura, 'Urban Society', 182–3, 186. On neighbourhoods, see Miura, 'Ṣāliḥiyya Quarter'; Luz, *Mamluk City*, 84–104.

[18] Grehan, 'Street Violence and Social Imagination', 220; Marino, *Le faubourg du Mīdān*, 23–5; Raymond, 'Urban Networks and Popular Movements'.

[19] Hirschler, 'Riten der Gewalt'; Elbendary, *Faces in the Crowd*, 87–107; Abou El Fadl, *Rebellion and Violence*, 234–94, 321–42.

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