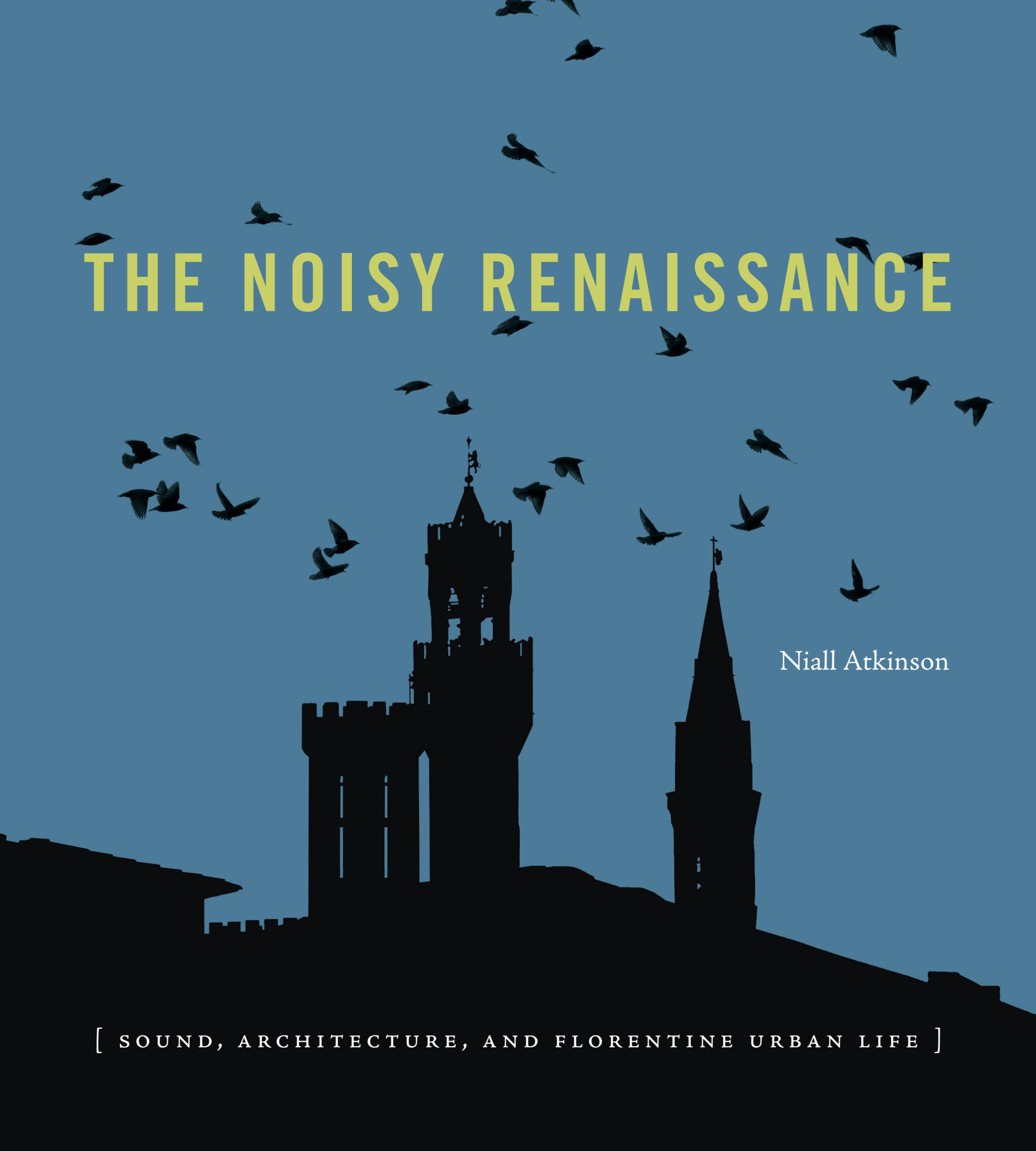
THE NOISY RENAISSANCE



Niall Atkinson

[SOUND, ARCHITECTURE, AND FLORENTINE URBAN LIFE]

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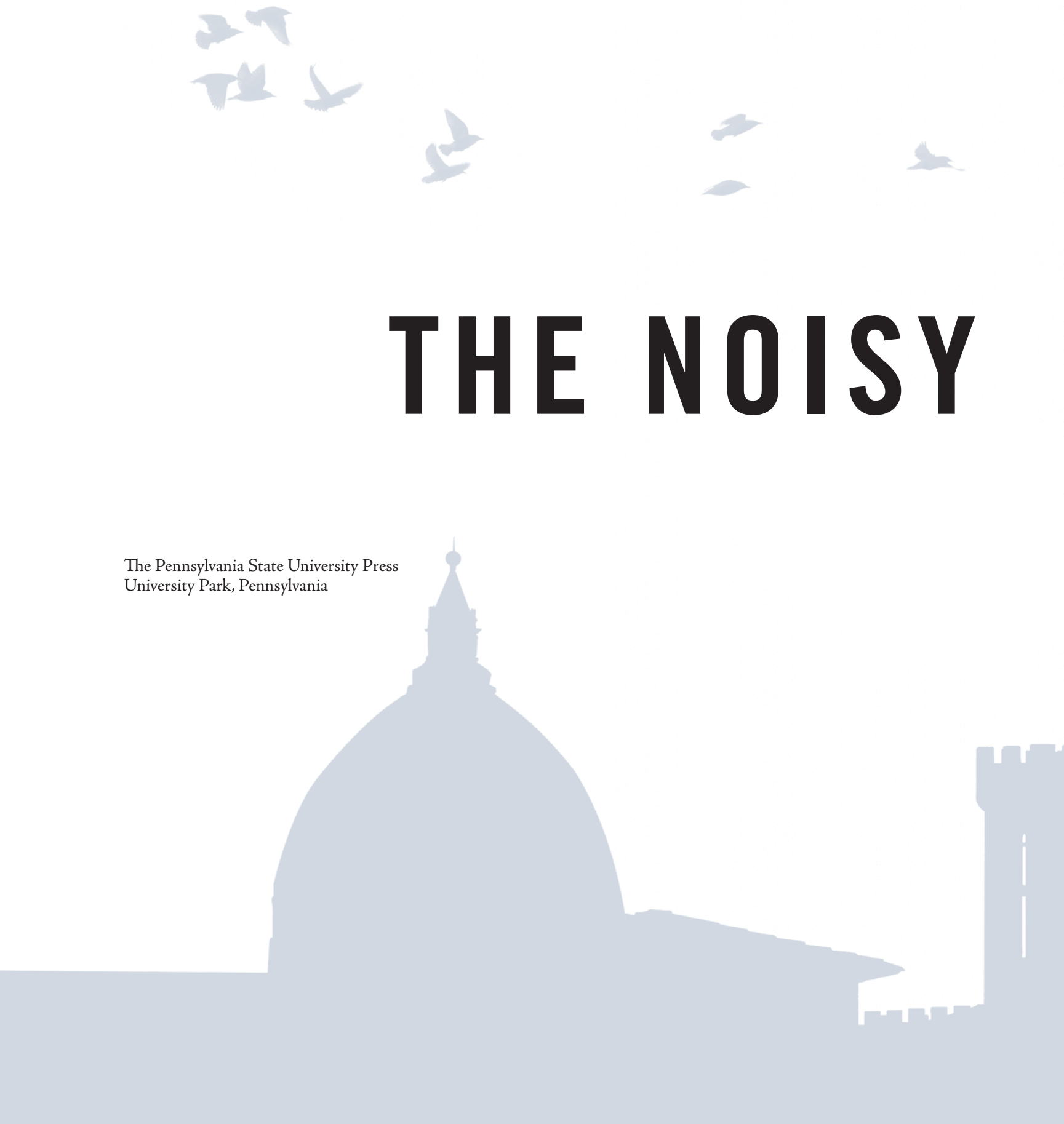

THE NOISY

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Niall Atkinson

RENAISSANCE

SOUND, ARCHITECTURE, AND FLORENTINE URBAN LIFE

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Authorship, that most central, perplexing, and vexed issue confronting art and architectural historians, haunts the imagination of the Italian Renaissance scholar with particular intensity. But even in an age often defined by towering proper names, not even Michelangelo could hide the army of experts and collaborators necessary for the successful completion of his most ambitious works. Although only my name is printed on the cover of this book, many other proper names occupy the numerous stops along this journey through the sounds of Florence, where I can now reflect upon how paradoxically collaborative such a seemingly individual task writing turns out to be.

My gratitude must begin with the three people who guided my research from the beginning and who laid the conceptual foundations of this study. John Najemy and Marilyn Migiel are two of the subtlest thinkers and interpreters of Renaissance texts that I have had the fortune to encounter. But singular gratitude must go to Medina Lasansky, whose reconceptualization of what architectural history can be, what it can do, and why it matters remains the intellectual basis through which I think about the past. I also want to thank Sheryl Reiss, who, with an open academic generosity, became an early mentor and supporter. I will always remember my happiest days at Cornell spent with my cohort of historians, all of whom continued to inspire me beyond the campus: Alizah Holstein, Sophus Reinert, Ionut Epurescu-Pascovici, and Robert Fredona. Bob, in particular, has been both a critical resource and sensitive interlocutor of all things Florentine all along this journey.

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When I began to present the findings of my research, I found a community of Italianists whose intellectual curiosity, generosity of spirit, openness, and general good humor sealed my deep affection for a field that continues to generate vigorous intellectual debates, just as it did centuries ago. But in particular, there were those who continued to engage with my work, exchange ideas, offer advice, share material, invite me to lunch or aperitivo, all of which inspired me to move in new directions: lifelong friends and colleagues, such as Patrick Baker, Babette Bohn, Luca Boschetto, Charles Burroughs, Meghan Callaghan, Catherine Carver, Douglas Dow, Nicholas Eckstein, Richard Goldthwaite, Richard Ingersoll, Fabian Jonietz, Dale Kent, Anne Leader, Alick McLean, M. Michèle Mulchahey, Jonathan Nelson, Nerida Newbigin, John Paoletti, Linda Pellecchia, Brenda Preyer, David Rosenthal, Patricia Rucidlo, Sharon Strocchia, Nicholas Terpstra, Martino Traxler, and Saundra Weddle. All of them have left a lasting imprint on the content of this book, and it is there that I can remember them all.

I would like to separate several persons from the above list because they belonged to a series of remarkable conferences and workshops held at the Courtauld Institute between 2009 and 2012, where many of the core narratives and methodological structures of this book were developed. "Street Life and Street Culture: Between Early Modern Europe and the Present" served as an intellectual incubator and brought me into close involvement and sustained dialogue with a remarkable set of scholars for whom I have a deep admiration and owe an intellectual debt, and whose work has a deep affinity with my own: Georgia Clarke, Fabrizio Nevola, David Rosenthal, Stephen Milner, Guido Rebecchini, and Rosa Salzberg.

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since discovering his research even before I became a graduate student. The spirit of his singular scholarship on Florentine architecture is everywhere in the pages that follow, because it is everywhere in the stones of Florence.

Both friends and family were also there throughout, and deserve to be mentioned for their own critical support: Carol Nisbet; Camille Crites; Emily Schiavone; Rocky Ruggero; Elaine Ruffolo; my sisters, Adelle and Esther; and my parents, Edward and Joy.

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Introduction

Journey into the Noisy Renaissance

On my very first visit to the Cornell University campus (figure 1), I was met by a graduate student who, as my guide through this unknown territory, would lead me on a micro-odyssey of the auditory zones of the Arts Quadrangle: the echoes and bizarre acoustic resonances created by clapping hands and voices under the south-east pier of the Johnson Museum (figure 2), the somber bells ringing from McGraw Tower (figure 3), and the random xylophone-like effect of rolling stones across the raised paving slabs of the terrace of Olin Library (figure 4).

From this experience of Cornell's topography, I learned several important lessons about architecture and sound long before I entered the Florentine archive. On the one hand, the bell tower organized a sanctioned spatial territory through the repetitive cadences of its daily rhythms, while on the other, one could make stones speak, make them respond to one's actions. Both created a dialogue between buildings and bodies. It was the curiosity and inventiveness of users, therefore, that could transform architecture into a series of ephemeral performances, demonstrating how the experience of the built environment, as Michael Camille has argued, was located precisely at the points where architecture intersected with the body's sensorial apparatus. I began to sense that much of the meaning, symbolism, and history of a building adhered to its surfaces over time, enacting a constant interpretive exchange between design intentions and spatial practices.

This book does not seek to answer the impossible phenomenological question of what Renaissance Florence sounded like. Although the increasingly

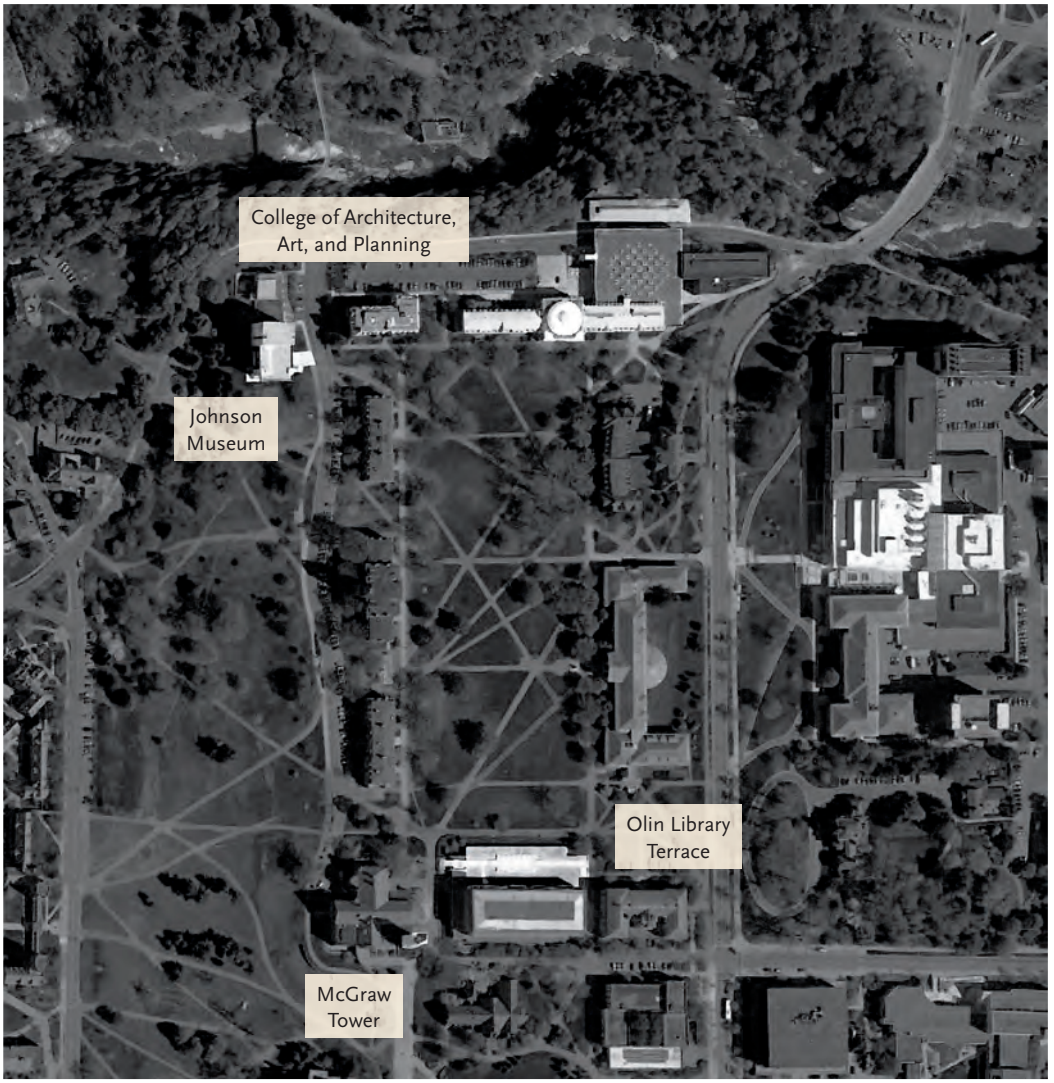


FIG. 1 Sites of acoustic architecture, Arts Quadrangle, Cornell University. Author's overlay of Google Earth. Map data © 2015 Google.

powerful digital technologies for virtual historical reconstructions promise to make such projects possible, I think their potential for analyzing historical soundscapes needs to be directed more critically toward the production of new forms of historical knowledge, rather than purely immersive experiences.[1] Instead, this study investigates the urban soundscape through the acoustic strategies and sonic imagination of Florentine governments, communities, and individuals. Such a method provides the opportunity to apprehend the deeply ingrained ways in which sound structured urban life, one of the least understood but most important aspects of the experience of premodern space. Recent studies have begun to approach the urban soundscape from a variety of disciplines and perspectives, and it is to them that I owe both the

FIG. 2 (*top left*) I. M. Pei & Partners, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, 1968–73. The hollow pier with the acoustical properties is highlighted. Photo by James Ewing, courtesy of the Johnson Museum.

FIG. 3 (*above*) William Henry Miller, McGraw Tower, Cornell University, 1891. Cornell010 at the English language Wikipedia.

FIG. 4 (*bottom left*) Graduate student Josi Ward throwing stones on the terrace of Olin Library, Cornell University, 2010. Photo by Lawrence Chua.

inspiration and the methodological range of perceiving the meaning of sound in the past.[2]

At the heart of the early modern soundscape, as many of these studies make clear, was the sound of bells, ringing from towers throughout the towns and cities of Europe.[3] They have not been the subject of a sustained architectural analysis as a network of sonic nodes transmitting messages across the urban landscape.[4] As a variety of historians acknowledge, bells were an integral meaning-generating component of premodern urban experience, playing a central role in urban policies, spiritual life, and daily social relations. They were fundamental in constructing, governing, and defining the meaning of urban spaces and were a principal factor in creating lasting bonds between bodies, communities, and the built environment. As a result, architectural historians cannot afford to ignore the expanding historical dialogue about the sensorial experience of the city, especially since it was the actual

physical arrangement of architectural structures as well as the very materials from which they were made that determined the particular sonic imprint of urban spaces.[5]

A related trajectory of historical inquiry concerns the transmission of information and the modes of communication that constituted the city as a dynamic spatial network.[6] What these studies have shown, in part, is that these sounds were not confined by the parameters of literacy, a phenomenon that causes a great deal of difficulty for historians wishing to convey information about the overwhelming majority of premodern city dwellers who could neither read nor write. For Renaissance Florence, as for any early modern city, the face-to-face nature of social relations meant that listening to the form and content of the entire acoustic spectrum of bells, trumpets, speeches, rumors, and gossip provided them with the means to mark time, chart politics, fulfill themselves spiritually, and maintain the bonds that connected them to the multiple communities and spaces in which they lived.

Although sound, by its nature, is fleeting and ephemeral, the documentary record and literary corpus of the Florentine Renaissance is surprisingly rich with allusions, references, and meditations on the relationship between sound, space, and communities, as Florentines were continually interrogating the borders and limits of their urban world. As a result, I have focused much of my attention on the more discordant sounds of a period known more for the harmonics attached to the design of its buildings, the coherence of its images, and the sophistication of its rituals. The Renaissance city was by no means a quiet place. In a variety of ways it spoke directly to its inhabitants, who, irresistibly, were drawn to speak back. With its buildings and spaces, walls and gates, doors and windows, it facilitated and obstructed the flow of information, the dissemination of official messages, the telling of stories, the performance of music, the rhythm of prayer, the trade in secrets, and the low-frequency murmur of rumors, lies, and gossip. The built environment was not the stage upon which a discordant urban drama played out, but the very medium that gave that drama form, shaped its meaning, and modulated its tones. The city expressed the most compelling aspects of its design when people danced on its surfaces, crowded its spaces, poked holes in its walls, and upended its hierarchical organization. And it is through these exchanges that we can learn a great deal not only about how contemporaries understood the buildings and spaces that surrounded them, but about how they participated in a collective dialogue that continually reinforced, undermined, and reconfigured architectural meaning.

Florentines understood their city, derived their sense of self, and enacted their social relationships by keeping their ears well attuned to all the sounds their city made, all its various voices, instruments, and bells, which were constantly enacting a complex interchange of competing messages. They were not passive listeners, but active users, who could make stones speak, make the buildings they confronted respond to their actions. Their curiosity and inventiveness did, in fact, transform architecture into a series of ephemeral performances, performances that the following chapters seek to excavate from the past.

The Empire of Vision and the Republic of Sound

Between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, Italy was the site of some of the most advanced experiments in what might be termed "techniques of visualization." Florence, in particular, played a central role in

the importation, reconfiguration, and dissemination of such techniques to the rest of Europe. For example, the accounting system of double-entry bookkeeping (*partita doppia*), in use since the turn of the fourteenth century in Italian merchant cities, made the computation of net worth through debt and credit easily visible in merchants' account books and facilitated the construction of complex international financial transactions across large geographies, numerous currencies, and diverse economies from the Atlantic to the Black Sea. Florentines also participated in some of the most advanced experiments in what would become modern geography and cartography. The map room created by Stefano Bonsignori and Ignazio Danti in the 1560s and '70s, still largely extant in the Palazzo Vecchio, represents some of the earliest and most accurate geographic representations of the Americas (figure 5). Through a comprehensive visualization of the known world, they rendered the terrestrial world visible on an individual scale, while Galileo's later refinements of the telescope transformed the visual relationship between earthly communities and the celestial cosmos.

Such visual technologies had pervasive and long-lasting effects in aesthetic, architectural, economic, and geographic fields of knowledge, but it was Filippo Brunelleschi's rediscovery, reinvention—or, to be more precise, "technologization"—of linear perspective in the early 1400s that has come to dominate our understanding of the relationship between vision, truth, and knowledge in Renaissance aesthetic production (figure 6). Brunelleschi was using perspective as an aid to represent architecture and urban space, transforming the city into a compelling and legible picture. These experiments formed part of a wider field of experiments that was generating a "representational language" for the visual description of cities and

FIG. 5 The sixteenth-century maps in the Guardaroba of the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. Photo by author.

urban environments across the perspectival divide. Contemporary cartographic realizations, geographic surveys, chorographic and ichnographic descriptions, and architectural "portraits" have invested a great deal in various perspectival modes appealing to the "eye" as the primary mode of understanding historical landscapes.[7] As a result, such representations, extracted from the conditions of their production, have tended to naturalize the way we understand urban landscapes as images, rather than as systems of relations. The photograph, as the privileged technique of visualization through which architectural history is practiced, often dislodges the architectural monument from both its built and its temporal surroundings, setting it adrift in history.

Reintegrating such representational practices back into the aural experience of the city is the primary goal of this study. To illustrate these connections, let me begin with Brunelleschi's second perspective panel (figure 6). Reconstructed from a textual description of the painted panel, it depicted Florence's central square and its architectural monument: the Piazza della Signoria and the Palace of the Priors

FIG. 6 Author's reconstruction of Brunelleschi's view of the Piazza della Signoria combined with a rendering of his second perspective panel. From this position the image was supposed to coalesce with the actual view of the palace and the tower, demonstrating how linear perspective was grounded not only in abstract but also in real and meaningful Florentine political space.

(now called the Palazzo Vecchio). Discussions of this two-dimensional reframing of architectural space have tended to deflect attention from the historically situated experience that such a scene represented for Florentine viewers. The oblique view across the square toward the building it frames coalesces seamlessly with Marvin Trachtenberg's groundbreaking analysis of the spatial layout of the square.[8] The underlying principles of the view were, according to Trachtenberg, grounded in trecento pictorial representations of architecture, in a set of flexible geometric ideals, and in the very real obstacles—economic and political—that confronted large-scale interventions into the densely built-up contested center of the city. These factors contributed to a design principle in which the geometric proportions of the palace were rotated out, over time, to determine the general parameters of the square, which contained a set of privileged sightlines that foregrounded and mediated the monumental harmony and beauty of the palace. This orchestrated ensemble "positioned" viewers in space and structured their vision of the palace and the authority of the regime that occupied it. Brunelleschi's perspective panel, viewed from the threshold of the piazza, confirmed the most visually expressive sightline of this ensemble and its civic ideology of republican government.

Right around the time of Brunelleschi's experiment, the Florentine merchant Goro Dati, in his description of the palace, expressed precisely the kind of visual harmony that these sightlines were supposed to evoke.[9] Willingly internalizing the political

FIG. 7 View of Brunelleschi's dome and the bell tower of Florence's cathedral. Photo by author.

and architectural rhetoric of the scene before him, Dati was not reduced to a disembodied floating eye. He was a fully conscious and feeling "I," who was also captivated by the sounds of the commune's bells, which rang to disseminate that rhetoric, echoing across the city. His description demonstrates how the vertical profile of the city's architecture was deeply integrated with the horizontal axis of the acoustic exchange between regime and inhabitants, between architecture and the body.

Seeing and hearing architecture would have been both a regular and extraordinary experience for Florentines. Churches were, in part, machines for making noise, amplifying, distorting, and enriching aural experience. When the new Florentine cathedral was consecrated in 1436, those inside would have seen and heard Brunelleschi's dome, one of the most important architectural feats of the Renaissance, as it reflected the polyphonic harmonies of Guillaume Dufay's specially commissioned motet, *Nuper rosarum flores* (figure 7).[10] Debate about this episode has focused on the structural relationships that exist between these musical and architectural compositions, part of a tradition of understanding architecture as frozen music through ideal or esoteric mathematical proportions deeply embedded in their principles of creation. But the focus on the formal production and reception of these creative practices—on the visual consumption of architecture and the aural appreciation of music—effaces the productive role of early listeners and the active participation of the buildings in producing aural communities.[11] Renaissance audiences would

not have been conditioned by the experience of the unidirectional passive acoustic design, from performer to audience, of modern concert halls. Such musical performances would have represented only a particularly erudite instance of the continual acoustic dialogue between sound and architecture through which Florentines staged the multiple dimensions of their personal, social, political, and spiritual lives. In these contexts, architecture was a product of those who sung in it, moved through it, creating a dialogue with it.

Based on a reading of the documentary record—legislation, diaries, chronicles, sermons, poems, and urban narratives—this study demonstrates how Florentines were extremely intent listeners and acute interpreters of the noises their city made, a landscape of sounds that was a crucial component in the construction, maintenance, and orchestration of urban life. This book, therefore, is founded on the idea of the soundscape as a larger system of vocal and acoustic exchanges that circulated through late medieval and Renaissance Florence. It seeks to excavate what Florentines said about those exchanges, how they understood and identified with them, what they listened for, how they used them to navigate through and negotiate space. It considers urban space as the site of the aural construction of both individual and communal identities and how architecture was a sound-making mechanism at the heart of the communicative networks that constituted the premodern city.

This approach to architecture inverts interpretation from the point of its production to the site of its reception. This was inspired by the question that art historian August Schmarsow posed in his inaugural lecture as chair of art history at the University of Leipzig in 1893. Is it "the massive piles of purposely hewn stone, the well-jointed beams, and the securely arched vaults," he asks, that constitute architecture, or does it "come into being only in that instant when human aesthetic reflection begins to transpose itself into the whole"?[12] The implication is that without bodily experience, there is no architecture. The essence of architectural creation was the point at which subjects enacted built space with their bodies.

Understanding architecture in the fuller sensorium, not only its relationship to the ear, but also to its entire bodily experience, requires that close attention be paid to the way in which it was experienced in its historical specificity. That such a trajectory for the discipline of architectural history, as a special concern of art history, was envisioned in the formative years of the discipline is made clear by Schmarsow's lecture (figure 13). In this meditation inflected by contemporary interest in the psychology of perception, he demonstrates how understanding the concept of "shaped space" is the key to understanding architecture. He alludes to the close proximity of the creation and experience of space. "At the outset," he writes, "the creative and the appreciative subjects are one and the same; they therefore constitute the starting point for our genetic explanation."[13] For Schmarsow, architecture fully came into being through the subject's bodily encounter with it. In explaining the relationship between architecture and subject in this way, Schmarsow came close to reversing the conventional understanding of the architectural design process. Instead of disciplining or liberating the body through the creation of space, Schmarsow implies, architects were actually responding, more or less successfully, to the way in which our projecting bodies reach out beyond their limits to situate themselves within a desired spatial environment. He believed that all individuals position themselves in space by constructing an extended perceptual field around them as a way

to apprehend and come to terms with their physical environment.[14] Within this apparatus it is only necessary for the imagination to speak, he writes, and lines would become walls, a mental framework would lead to increasingly concrete demarcations of space.[15] It was as if each individual was manipulating the space around him or her in a creative gesture, responding to and intervening in the architectural landscape by mentally ordering and bringing into being protective, knowable, spatial borders that always established the flexible reference points of a highly customized inside and an outside. Architecture, therefore, was a dialectic between the design of space and its reconfiguration by the body that confronted it with its sensorial apparatus.

If this experience of space, for Schmarsow, was at the heart of architectural creation, then the particular dynamics of creation and experience never detached themselves from the body. As an art historian, he located the primary perception of space squarely with vision, but he was well aware that such perceptions arose from "residues of the body's sensorial experience; [to which] muscular sensations, the sensitivity of our skin, and the structure of our body all contribute."[16] All of these sensations are ordered around the vertical and horizontal vectors of the body itself, which establishes the axes of orientation for its relations to space.[17] Schmarsow's embodiment of the architectural experience points to the way in which he reoriented the perception of architecture as the spatial enclosure of the body. For him, the subject's power lay in the body's will toward organizing the space around it, and this went hand in hand with a will toward regularity, to the ideal proportions found in mathematics, and would ultimately lead to the desire to create a harmonic built environment. Architectural ideals began in the body and then were formalized in the professionalization of the architect and the urban planning principles that were an important feature of the Renaissance organization of knowledge.[18] For Schmarsow, this collaboration between architecture and its reception was the fundamental dynamic that animated its development.

Schmarsow does not place any singular emphasis on the ear at this point, but he does link it to the architectural experience, comparing architectural plans to musical scores and buildings to performances. The relationship between these two modes of creation is anticipatory; the score can evoke the piece, while the plans can intimate the building before it is built, linking both to an interpretive performance of ideas and design. However, the major distinction, he warns, comes from the apparently fleeting nature of sound itself, where "the musical performance thunders forth and fades away almost in the same instant in which it comes to life."[19] Architecture, on the other hand, persists. Even so, Schmarsow makes a crucial point, although he himself would not pursue it, that poses the question about just exactly where the threshold of the "artistic work" lies. In doing so, he links the experience of music to the experience of architecture. For Schmarsow this experience remains in a pure and free vision, but the musical analogy itself persists, intentionally or not, of architecture as performance. While listening to a piece of music in a concert hall, the audience listens not only to the composer's harmonic order, but also to the acoustic imprint of the concert hall itself, the actual sound that the concert hall helps to make. In effect, the audience is also listening to the building.

As an art historian who had profoundly original ideas about architecture, Schmarsow provides a solid disciplinary grounding for an investigation of the sonic dimensions of Florence since it is derived from

issues and concepts that are central to architectural history's mode of inquiry. This study will show how the architecture of Renaissance Florence was a major protagonist and backdrop, transmitter and receiver, obstacle to and facilitator of the communicative networks that bound the city together as a physical object and as a social community. Therefore, understanding how sound provided the medium through which many of the most important dramas of the early modern city were played out can only deepen our historical knowledge about the diverse nature of the relationship between architecture and social relations. Between legislation, diaries, and stories, Florentines traced, recorded, and constructed a web of interlaced fluid topographies that helped them to negotiate the spaces of the city. Such topographies were an array of fragments and a set of irreconcilable images of the city.[20] These transactions between bodies and information constituted moving corporeal narratives that mapped and remapped the city, making spaces conform to their desire, both collective and individual.[21] This environment—these streets, squares, and buildings—was a network at the center of competing forces such as government legislation, social and political conflict, environmental conditions, collective memories, and narrative interpretation.

The Urban Soundscape

As much as they are apprehended by the various manifestations of the "eye"—the period eye, the perspectival eye, the naïve, the critical, and the interpreting eye—space and architecture are also experienced with the ear, with a particular aural intensity. Instead of a fixed, even a moving, searching eye on a quest for a point of view, it is the ear that fully perceives architecture as an enveloping and global enclosure of space. It is an integrated part of the multidimensional and embodied modern subject—the searching, thinking, desiring, interpreting, and wondering "I." According to the acoustics specialists Barry Blesser and Linda-Ruth Salter, the sounds we make and hear while moving through the city allow us to perceive the dimensions of the built environment, its materials, and its spatial form.[22] Our sense of space depends heavily on our ears, which, unlike our eyes, we cannot close. A street or a square, like any urban space, is a "composite of numerous surfaces, objects, and geometries" creating a complex environment that is a comprehensive "aural architecture."[23] But the primacy of vision imposed upon Renaissance urban design only serves to intensify the silence of historical spaces, suppressing the body's necessary role in the intuition of space and impoverishing our historical understanding of the city and its spaces, which were always much more than simply a vision of beauty.

Compounding this is the problem of noise as a meaningless sign in the modern city, based on the assumption that something fundamental to our urban social identity has been irredeemably lost with the profound change in the nature of the urban soundscape brought about by the industrialization and electrical amplification of environmental sounds. This wall of sound, produced by electricity and the internal combustion engine, works to mask low-frequency sounds. By reducing their spatial range, high-level "white noise" that clogs our current metropolitan condition actually shrinks what Bruce Smith calls the "'acoustic horizon' . . . producing for the listener a relatively constricted sense of space."[24] In a past where there were fewer high-intensity noises and where information was transmitted primarily in audible media, listening was a necessary and critical art, and excavating the

soundscape is not simply the evocation of a simpler, fuller, richer, and more genuine aural past.

R. Murray Schafer's pioneering delineation of the urban soundscape as a historically situated phenomenon was an ethically based critique of its damaging effects upon modern societies, and he was actively trying to promote the idea that "good" soundscapes, like good landscapes, could be properly designed.[25] Notably, the solution for him was embodied in what he believed was the most "important revolution in aesthetic education in the twentieth century," the Bauhaus movement,[26] which for him provided the key, not to destroying or eliminating industrial sounds, but to embracing them and subordinating them to modernist aesthetics so that the new technologies could be beautiful and exciting, rather than terrifying and dehumanizing. In doing so, Schafer almost made a direct link between architecture, the soundscape, and urban design.

However, Schafer's interest in natural sounds led more to an aesthetic distaste for postindustrial sounds that threatened human society than to a comprehensive theory of how the soundscape functioned as a cultural mode of perception and knowledge. In the premodern environments to which he looked back, on the other hand, the content of sounds as potential messages was crucial for listeners in developing and maintaining links to their city. According to Emily Thompson, Schafer's soundscape can be complicated and nuanced by Alain Corbin's conceptual linking of it to the representation of landscape. "If one can agree that landscape is a way of analyzing space, of loading it with meanings and emotions, and of making it available for aesthetic appreciation, the landscape defined by various kinds of sound fits this definition particularly well."[27] Corbin draws an analogy between the soundscape and landscape as perceptual categories, both of which function as aesthetic modes of production. Landscape painting, for example, is a way of reading, constructing, and making sense of the world. Reading and participating in the auditory landscape was a way of doing the same. Florentines confronted and took account of their sonic environment with similar assumptions, and they responded to it with other sounds, transcribed what they heard into other media, and used what they heard to establish, through multiple soundscapes, the communities that bound them to civic space.

Regulations, legal cases, chronicles, and diaries, however, may not seem, at first glance, to amount to objects or texts offered for aesthetic appreciation. However, their complicated negotiations and reactions to the aural landscape describe a certain type of poetics of living in the tension between the sonic dimensions of official rituals and local responses. Corbin's work affirms what Florentine sources reveal: that reading the auditory environment involved the construction of identities, of both individuals and communities, and gave rhythm to forgotten modes of social relations, making possible collective forms of expressions, such as rejoicing and conviviality.[28]

Of the loudest noises premodern communities were likely to hear—thunder, cannon fire, and bells[29]—only bells constituted a regular, rhythmic, densely meaningful acoustic system. Bells were arguably the most important urban sounds in the premodern world since they connected inhabitants to the most intimate aspects of their lives: to their religion, their spiritual expression, their past, their dead, their government, their safety, their civic duties, their labor, and their collective celebrations.[30] According to what can be reconstructed from historical sources, everyday life in Florence in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was temporally permeated by the sound of bells.

This dense acoustic environment created by the city's bell towers, both religious and civic, meant that hardly one day sounded the same as the next.[31] At stake was the control and meaning of urban space through a sonic world that was bound by a series of conventions, laws, and regulations that emanated from both civic and religious authorities in the form of statutes, as well as ecclesiastical prescriptions.

Bells formed an intricate syntax, a recognizable field of signs, and an almost universal auditory language, and, as a result, they play a central role in this study. They represented a mode of mass communication with which no other media in preprint culture could compete in terms of speed, if not complexity. They were an extension of collective or corporate voices, such as the church, religious orders, guilds, the courts, and the governing regime. Unlike visible urban signs, moreover, messages sent by bells could travel around corners and pass through walls. The communal bell and tower, an architecture that spoke and gave voice to a community, its past and its future, was a monument that could, therefore, stand for the city itself, its autonomy and collective unity (figure 9).[32]

However, in spite of the centrality of sound to the production of meaning in urban space in the premodern city, the acoustic aspects of architecture remain largely hidden by the visual media through which the materiality of the past is reconstructed. The ephemerality of sound contrasts radically with the material presence of architecture, and the location of architectural history within a visually based discipline has tended to downplay the other, "weaker" senses. In contrast, what I am calling the "acoustic art of city-building" stands out in stark contrast to the conventional practice of architectural history, where the stunning silence of pictures of nearly empty spaces is the medium through which the architectural past is traditionally interrogated. Buildings and spaces are ideally photographed and studied without the presence of bodies for whom they were built and whose aural presence—the noise they make—is as offensive as their visual presence. Bodies often obscure a clear perspective of design principles, geometry, light, and shadow (figure 8). Architectural photography, in general, tends to visually displace crucial aspects of the social experience of buildings and spaces, as it distills an ideal image of pure form. It renders architecture as the pure expression of design, grafting onto it the isolation and emptiness of a museological ideal where its aesthetic attributes are foregrounded in a rarefied and unobtrusive environment that permits the kind of careful and intimate visual investigation that visual analysis requires (figure 8, left). This is, after all, hardly surprising, ensconced as the discipline of architectural history is, and, to an extent must be, in a methodological camera obscura of afterimages where the infiltration of bodies, vehicles, and the refuse of modern life clutters the distance between the historical eye and the visual traces of the past (figure 149). Unlike stones, whose durability allows them to persist and which can be photographed in all their stages of decay and conservation, the sounds that animated them have long since vanished, disappearing almost at the moment of their utterance.

Or have they? Do they still resound in the effects they produced on the concrete face of the city, in the memory of its inhabitants, or in the stories they told about themselves and their communities? The relationship between sound, architecture, and urban space in the premodern city is characterized by a fluid exchange of their qualities of durability and ephemerality, where sound can dissolve the integrity of walls while it also contains the power to solidify architecture's deep relationship to the past. Where such walls

FIG. 8 Two views of the Piazza Santissima Annunziata. (*left*) The clean, uninterrupted sightlines of the square can be seen in Hilde Lotz-Bauer's photograph of the piazza, 1943. Photo: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz—Max-Planck-Institut. (*right*) The obscuring intrusion of bodies. Market day in the piazza. Photo by author.

have survived into the present, this sonic temporality augments the visual evidence of the architectural historian. However, where walls have disappeared, sound contains the ability to unearth thresholds and demarcate lost zones of historical importance. In other words, the aural dimensions of the built environment can prove to be more durable than the stones themselves as they resurrect ghostly echoes of the past. They can, therefore, tell us a great deal about the meaning of architecture in the past that the eye might not be able to see.

When one turns to the historical dynamics of urban space not only as a problem of design, an expression of ideology, or a medium for public ritual—the production of a determined will to order—but also as a social and psychological phenomenon—the zone of social action and exchange—then one senses something beyond vision precisely at the moment when architectural production merges with the site of its experience (figure 8, right). Contemporary observers found themselves confronted by a collection of structures and spaces that were simultaneously the product

FIG. 9 The Palazzo Vecchio seen from the cupola of the Florentine cathedral. Photo by author.

of certain myths, the protagonist of urban narratives, their personal space of self-fashioning, their home, and the theater of social exchange.

Because the Florentine soundscape can only be gleaned from the documentary record, it necessarily remains incomplete, fragmentary, and allusive, especially since the preserved traces lie scattered in so many disparate forms. Beyond bells, the soundscape included all manner of human voices, from whispers and murmurs to shouts and cheers. They emanated from single persons and from assembled crowds. They were official and unexpected, planned and spontaneous. They included instruments that proclaimed new legislation and played music, stories that enchanted audiences, and choruses that praised visitors, as well as the more informal exchange of rumors and gossip, whispers and shouts. The first chapter, therefore, deploys four urban stories in order to reveal the multiple dimensions of the Florentine soundscape and to show how profoundly it was embedded in the sonic imagination of the city's inhabitants. It foregrounds the historical methodology of this study by setting imaginary but realistic dramas next to historical events to show how the soundscape pervades both and provides a medium through which social and political relations can be constructed, interrogated, and reconfigured.

The next two chapters deal with the spatial dimensions of sound through an analysis of the acoustic regime orchestrated by the ringing of bells.

FIG. 10 The skyline of Florence from the Belvedere fortress, showing the principal vertical nodes of its premodern soundscape. Photo by author.

Chapter 2 traces the placement and construction of the major bell towers in Florence and the bells associated with them, outlining the symbolic structures of the civic and sacred soundscapes that overlaid the city with an integrated aural choreography (figure 10). It ends with a reconstruction of the daily ringing that marked the rhythms of urban life. As the general sonic armature upon which the soundscape depended, bells were fundamental to the construction of urban time and urban space in the premodern city. Chapter 3, therefore, examines the aural construction of these categories, demonstrating their role in constituting the direct experience of the city's temporal and spatial coordinates. In doing so, it delves deeper into specific aural moments of the day outlined in the previous chapter in order to explore the aural construction of urban communities.

Chapter 4 addresses the systems of vocal communication, in which gossip, rumor, and stories circulated through urban space and were a constant source of anxiety and entertainment in the urban milieu. It ends with an exploration of how those voices and their content were inflected, reconfigured, and modulated as they passed through the physical medium of public space, allowing the city itself to become an aural protagonist in the urban drama. Finally, chapter 5 looks at the way that both voices and bells played a central role in the brief but successful revolution of Florentine wool workers, who were able to undermine the city's soundscape and use it to construct a legitimate voice to effectively organize their insurrection and disseminate their demands. This historical episode reveals how the soundscape was not simply the backdrop against which history was played out, but the very medium through which historical relations were made, won and lost, remembered and

forgotten in the streets and squares of early modern Florence. Listening to the city was a critical practice for Florentines, and they have left many traces of the ways in which they responded to their city, how they understood its exceptional character, how they linked it to their ordinary lives and interests, and how they treated its effects as tools for various purposes. Through these sounds, the repetitive cadences of their daily rhythms, Florentines negotiated their relationships with the city and built the dynamic fluid acoustic topographies that played such a crucial role in defining Florentine urban life.

The Acoustic Art of City-Building

I.

What would it mean to build a city with sound? Several possible responses to that question are the subject of this chapter. Schmarsow's insights into the way architecture was the result of a transaction between the body and the building can be expanded historically to encompass the larger social body. This can be illustrated in the fundamentally dual nature of the city as physical phenomenon, a collection of buildings surrounded by a wall and located in space—the *urbs*—and the city as a cultural dynamic, a collection of people gathered together to live according to reason[1]—the *civitas*. Although in contemporary use this distinction was elided by the preference for the term *civitas* to designate the Italian city, these two concepts of the city were, in a variety of ways, held in a state of mutual dependence, where the one was rarely represented without the other.[2]

Consider, for example, the remarkable portrait of Florence found in a mid-fourteenth-century fresco in the headquarters of the confraternity of the Misericordia in Florence (figures 11, 12). The city's walls enclose a dense topography of monumental stone buildings that form a united architectural mass even as they display details of recognizable structures. Surrounding the walls is the larger Florentine social body, whose members kneel in prayer. In turn, they are surmounted by the protective mantle of the Virgin of Mercy, who rises above the scene and to whom the Florentine prayers are directed. These successive layers of protection—walls, praying bodies, divine embrace—foreground how both stones and bodies protect the integrity of the city understood as a series of concentric layers of mutually

FIG. 11 In this fresco of the Virgin of Mercy, she hovers over an image of the city and is engulfed herself by an adoring assembly of Florentine citizens. Note that she does not encircle the faithful within her mantle as in conventional representations of the Virgin of Mercy. Madonna della Misericordia, Bigallo, Florence, c. 1342. Photo by author.

FIG. 12 The city of Florence enveloped in the protective embrace of its citizens. The city's principal religious and civic buildings and their towers are highlighted. Madonna della Misericordia, Bigallo, Florence, c. 1342 (detail). Photo by author.

reinforcing entities, while both were also under the celestial safekeeping of the patron saint. This image clearly reveals the Florentine desire to sanctify both concrete space and the communities that inhabited it. In a more schematic but formal way, the city's official self-expression, both linguistically and visually, maintained this distinction between the city as a physical and a social phenomenon, while consistently presenting both aspects side by side. For example, the coats of arms that represented the commune of Florence—the red lily—and the citizens (*popolo*) of Florence—the red cross—were among the most important and ubiquitous symbols of the city, marking its most important public monuments and spaces. They can be seen side by side on the city's gates, its public palaces, and the cathedral, and in numerous representations of the state (figures 13–15). Similarly, Florentine legal documents almost always modify the signifier "Florence" with such terms as "the people" (*popolo*) and "the city" (*cittade*, *comune*), a formulaic phrasing that explicitly combines and designates the jurisdiction of the law over both the social and the spatial domains of the city. Consequently, Florentines constantly encountered the dual identity of their city in the very places and contexts where such identities were staged, where civic rituals would have dramatized their bonds to others and to the concrete structures that defined their daily lives. This dialectic between the concrete and the social defines the range of ways in which Florentines sought to project themselves onto the spaces around them, to unite their social selves with the built environment, and sound was often the binding mechanism that made this real and concrete.

What is crucial in this approach is that space and time were not preexisting categories but products of

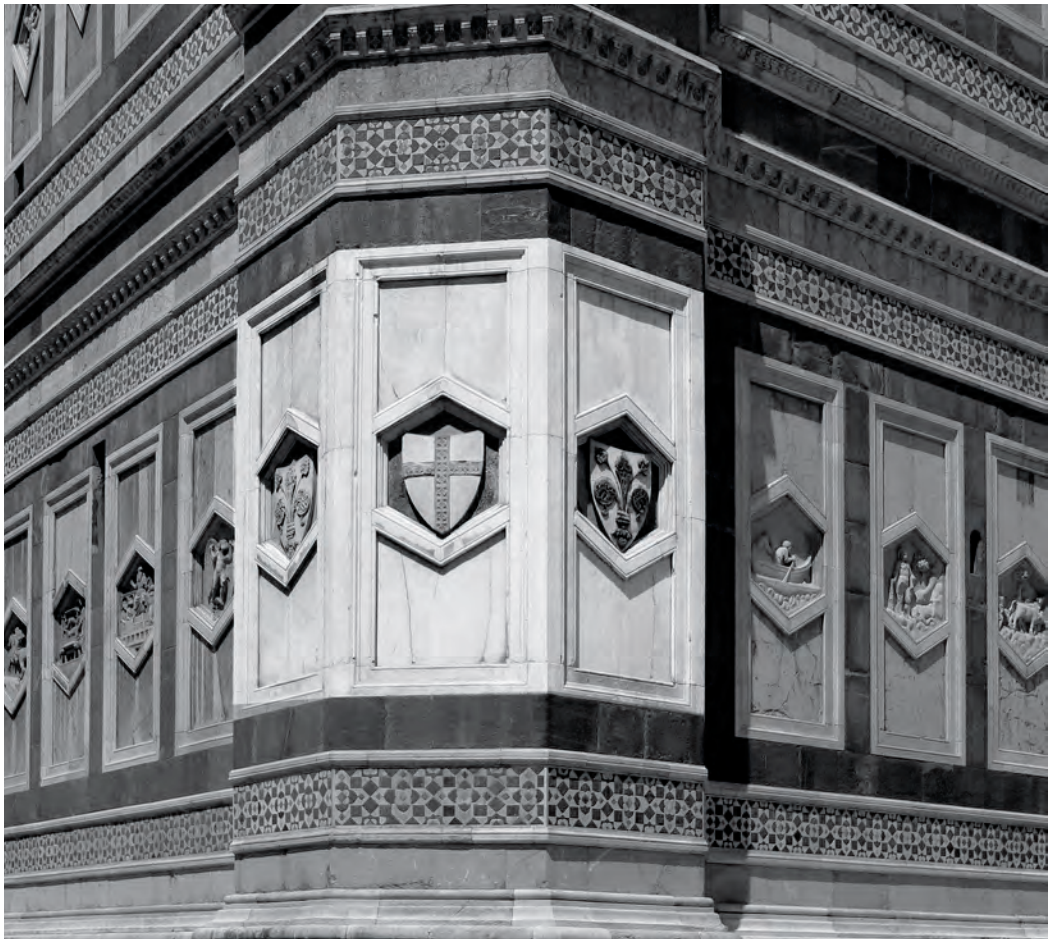


FIG. 13 Corner of the cathedral bell tower, highlighting the most important republican symbols: the red lily (commune) and red cross (*popolo*) of Florence set within the sculptural relief cycles of human creativity, mechanical arts, and labors. Photo by author.

the social practices of the city itself. Through the continual repetition and transformation of the sounds the city made, space and time were continually reconfigured in a historical process that linked the meaning of buildings directly to the dynamics of social and political relations. The historical development of architectural style as well as urban design, as it has been understood as a product of ideas, politics, propaganda, taste, and institutional needs, is complicated by the fact that the symbolic meanings *we* have derived from them are necessarily inflected by the way historical meaning was always contingent upon the actual use and experience of the built environment. Buildings and spaces were constantly reinterpreted through the actions of those whose well-being depended precisely on both understanding the nuances in urban spatial politics and having the capacity to bend those meanings toward one's desires. In other words, the relative stability of stones and the persistence of architectural motifs have made it difficult to integrate the ways in which the built environment was both a conceptual whole and a series of conflicted fragments, all of which

FIG. 14 Gate of San Miniato, highlighting the paired symbols of the commune and the *popolo* at the threshold of the city, Florence. Photo by author.

FIG. 15 Examples of some of the highly restricted symbols allowed to adorn public buildings in Florence. Papal keys (*top*), the royal arms of Robert of Anjou (*lower center*), and Florentine communal arms (*lower outside left and right*) over the south entrance to the Bargello, the former Palace of the Podestà, Florence. These arms were likely painted, and those flanking the lilies of Anjou could have been the red-and-white military standard of the Florentine army. Photo by author.

were unstable in meaning and subject to the continual scrutiny, violence, ritual, and polyvalent perceptions of a very complicated network of communities. It is this element of the experience and reception of architecture by urban cultures that has inspired this investigation into sonic culture of streets and squares in early modern Florence.

The sounds that one heard in Florence were as crucial as the sights one saw in a society where information was a product of the full sensorial experience of the city. Reconstructing those aspects of the Florentine urban soundscape that are available to us, however indirectly, allows one to demonstrate the dynamic interplay of the city as *urbs* and the city as *civitas*, and how such a dynamic can deepen our understanding of the ways in which early modern culture understood the world it built up around it.

Harmony/Order—Amphion's Walls

Florentines were constantly making noise, and so was their city, and this required that they pay attention to both the harmonic and the discordant dimensions of the city, understood as the product of stones and communities, through specific modes of representation. This dialectic between creation and experience, production and reception, is revealed by the representational strategies used by Florentines to forge symbolic links between their city and the wider cosmos. The stories that urban inhabitants told themselves about the origins of their city speak volumes about how they understood their past, who they imagined themselves to be in the present, and where they hoped to go in the future. Such myths represented ways in which social groups defined themselves within both larger and more localized groups that were always making competing claims of legitimacy. Visions of distant and ideal cities could coincide with a desire, on the part of urban residents, to transpose a certain harmonics of design onto the necessarily fractured and unfinished built environment that surrounded them. In this way, the city in which they lived existed as both a mental ideal unity and a concrete physical aggregate of discordant parts. Such visions, however, captured in narrative as much as they were explicitly prescribed in legislation, imagined the social and the physical city as a fully integrated unity, where the cross and the lily, the *popolo* and the commune, were clearly recognizable in the harmony of their interaction. Many descriptions of medieval and Renaissance cities dramatize this dialectic between the ideal and the real. When Florentines described, imagined, and recounted their experience of the city, they demonstrated a will toward understanding it as a social experiment whose imagined coherence was derived from its connection to cosmic harmony, ideal geometry, ancient myths, legendary foundations, and oft-repeated narratives.

The myth of Amphion illustrates this point explicitly. This ancient narrative links the organizational precision of music to the ordering of stones into walls. According to legend, Amphion built the city of Thebes solely with the power of music. By playing his instrument so sweetly, he induced the stones of Mount Cytheron to order themselves, one on top of the other, until they formed the walls of the ancient city (figure 16). This mythical tale is referred to in several ancient sources. Here is the passage from Horace's *Ars poetica*: "Amphion, builder of Thebes' citadel, moved stones by the sound of his lyre, and led them whither he would by his supplicating spell. In days of yore, this was wisdom, to draw a line between public and private rights, between things sacred and things

FIG. 16 Giambattista Tiepolo, *The Power of Eloquence*, 1724/25, Palazzo Sandi, Venice. Detail of Amphion building the walls of Thebes through the irresistible sound of his lyre. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, N.Y.

common, to check vagrant union, to give rules for wedded life, to build towns, and grave laws on tables of wood; and so honor and fame fell to bards and their songs."[3]

The resulting harmony was one in which the legal, sacred, social, and civic jurisdictions of urban life were clearly demarcated and embodied in the songs of the rhapsodes, the singer-poets of the ancient world. It was the verbal enunciation, the acoustic performance, through which the constitutive elements of the city came into being as a multiple system of thresholds. Amphion,[4] erstwhile king of Thebes, son of Jove and Antiope, husband of Niobe, and twin brother of Zethus, built the walls and the seven legendary gates around the city of Thebes.[5] He did this not, however, through any human sweat or physical toil but through the intellectual power of the liberal arts, the human sciences, and most particularly that of music. In this mythical literary context, the creation of the city, therefore, relied on the intellectual power of the mind to organize matter through the mathematical acoustics of music. The conception of the ideal city lay in the harmonic way it defined borders and separated elements in an orderly and rational way. On a more practical level, the Florentine government was extremely preoccupied with the precise delineation of borders, separating public from private and regulating access to a hierarchical system of spaces. Echoes of Amphion's harmonics permeated legislative texts as a set of abstract goals driving very concrete practices of urban regulation, which represented the correlative vision of a well-functioning city. The repetitions and reiterations of these kinds of laws that

sought to manage the order of public space betray Florentine legislators' anxiety about the chaotic and far from ideal negotiation of territories and borders that occurred in actual practice, where the overlapping ties of neighborhood, family, economics, and memory tended to blur and challenge such borders.[6]

It is not my claim that Florentine legislators referred consciously and specifically to a myth like Amphion in order to give shape to actual policies. Instead, my claim is that a certain set of ideals that connected the city and its inhabitants to a larger cosmic harmony underlay the earthly geometries of the lived spaces of the city and its political propaganda. As David Friedman has remarked, when Florentines described their city, they transformed it into an ideal and harmonious geometry that "glossed over specific topographical details, giving a generalized account of regular and recognizable shapes."[7] In other words, they were continually harmonizing their actual experience to conform to an imagined ideal. This formed a complement to the desire by planners, who were often part of the same governing class, to instill or imagine that such a harmonics guided planning as well.

Florentine sources reveal, moreover, that the auditory environment was a primary sensorial field through which identities, of both individuals and communities, were continually reconstructed and maintained in ways that seem, at first, to contradict a desire for harmony. This environment gave rhythm to forgotten modes of social relations, making possible collective forms of expression, both celebratory and conflicting, which are now almost completely lost to us.[8] Such conviviality and discord lie in stark contrast to the ordered, rational harmony that constitutes the beauty of Amphion's mythical founding of Thebes and is vividly brought to life by the fourteenth-century Florentine poet Antonio Pucci (c. 1320–c. 1388).[9] Pucci will be a recurring figure in this study because his life, unlike that of any other figure, was so profoundly integrated with the city as noise-making machine. He served as bell ringer of the commune from 1334 to about 1352.[10] In this capacity he was responsible for maintaining a sonic regime that choreographed the daily activities of the city's inhabitants throughout the day. For the next seventeen years, until 1369, he served as town crier (*banditore*) of the commune, whose duties included observing council deliberations and proclaiming laws and notices to the people throughout the city.[11] Between 1371 and 1382 he held the position of *guardiano degli atti* of the city's merchant tribunal, the Mercanzia, which was involved in stabilizing lines of credit. As a figure who will reappear throughout this study, he represents an important link between the sonic dimensions of the street and those of the Florentine government. He was also the author of one of the most widely circulated compendiums employed by professional storytellers to organize their repertoires.[12] Known as a *zibaldone*, this Florentine genre of journal or scrapbook was used to preserve all kinds of disparate material collected from a range of sources. Organized together, they reflected, on the one hand, the personal interests and character of their authors and, on the other, the more general circulation of learned and popular texts throughout Florentine society.

In one passage of his *zibaldone*, Pucci transcribes the details of Amphion's acoustically built city. This is his version of the story: "Amphion was son of Jove and husband of Niobe and builder of the city of Thebes. He was an expert and very well educated and with the help of the sciences he ordered and made that city, especially through the science of music because he and his wife played and sang so sweetly that according to the poets the stones picked themselves

up, and moved and arranged themselves one on top of the other, and in this way he walled the city."[13]

The *zibaldone* format was well suited for juxtaposing diverse texts, the pairing of which could evoke unimagined associations. Florentines used it to record such things as their favorite tales, proverbs, sermons, memories, passages from Dante, contemporary events, classical fragments, rumors, and gossip, all of which amounted to a kind of haphazard intertextual experiment that was the corollary to the random encounters and fragmented vistas that characterized a society that relied heavily on face-to-face oral communication. As an educated functionary, Pucci was interested in the classical past for how it spoke to his own present circumstances. Based on the number of copies and the contents of this manuscript, scholars have determined that this *zibaldone*, like so many others similar to it, provided a circulating repertoire for the public performance of such narratives sung by professional storytellers, known as *cantimpanche* or *cantastorie*. As such, Amphion's musical harmony would have had concrete presence in the voices of so many singers catering to the expectations and imagination of urban audiences.

Amphion's tale is set amid stories from Ovid, discussions of Greek gods, passages from Dante, and references to contemporary events in Florence. It follows the foundation myths of various real and mythical cities (Rome, Venice, Saracen cities), all based on the travel writings of Marco Polo. There is a city built on water, and one where the inhabitants make wool from the bark of trees. He counts rooms and houses, measures the wall of the tower of Babel and the steps of Babylon. He describes how Alexander the Great founded twelve cities, and finally he arrives at the legendary origins of his own city of Florence,[14] followed eventually by comments on Arezzo, Perugia, Todi, and Venice. It is a mix of the real and the fantastic, all destined for dissemination in the public piazza. Such emphasis on describing the origins of both fabled and real cities relates directly to the urban setting in which these stories were heard by Florentines. As such, these tales would have echoed within actual urban spaces, imbuing streets and squares with the most fantastic associations and a richer, more cosmopolitan cultural memory.

However, the compilers of *zibaldoni* were never passive copyists. They intervened continually in texts that they made conform to their real and symbolic worlds, with anecdotes, rewritings, and personal interpretations. In order to figure out what the myth of Amphion means, therefore, Pucci, like any self-respecting Florentine, turns immediately to Dante for an explanation. Reading the *Commedia* as a compendium of knowledge, Pucci finds in the *Inferno*, canto 32, that Dante had appealed to the same muses of the human sciences that had helped Amphion to build Thebes. He did so in order that they might also give *him* the linguistic power to construct, through words, the enveloping textual frame around the hell into which he was descending: "and Dante, however, said it like this: 'May those ladies help my verse.' They helped Dante to enclose Thebes so that his tale would not differ from the historical fact."[15] Pucci, who was quite capable of spotting a musical metaphor when he saw one, concludes from his reading of Dante that the stones did not actually move and transform themselves into walls at all, but that the power of the music was manifested in the wisdom and good judgment displayed by Amphion, who was able to protect and maintain the city.[16] In doing so, Pucci was following a general trend in contemporary Dante scholarship that argued that Amphion's metaphorical power of city-building lay in his absolute gracefulness as a speaker.

Therefore, the author of *L'ottimo commento*, Andrea Lancia, claimed that, although the story recounts how Amphion played and sang so sweetly with the help of the muses, this was a figurative image, and that it was not the songs or the music but the sound of Amphion's voice as a wise speaker that allowed the city to grow and be protected. It was the men of the city who were sweet and capable of being shaped, but also rugged like the stones that were guided by his words into place.[17] In the commentary of an anonymous diarist, artisans built the city without suffering any physical fatigue while listening to the sonorous sounds of Amphion's lyre. But in truth, he explains, Amphion's auditory power was actually in his speaking voice, a voice capable of moving the souls of men to make what he desired.[18] For Jacopo della Lana, the workers refused any payment for building the city other than the sweet sound of Amphion's voice,[19] and Guido da Pisa identified the stones as symbolizing recalcitrant bodies, men who were enticed to obey laws and follow customs by the enchanting sound of reason itself.[20] In each case, Amphion's rhetorical power, the sheer eloquence of his voice, could motivate people, incite souls to action, literally civilize men, transforming them into urban communities as strong as the stones piled into defensive walls. It was the poetic corollary to the decidedly more prosaic sounds of Pucci's rather less melodious description of the Mercato Vecchio.

Dissonance/Disorder—Pucci's Marketplace

An urban poet, compiler of stories, earnest patriot, bell ringer, town crier, and urban storyteller, Antonio Pucci spent his life in public service to the Florentine commune.[21] As a full-time civil servant, he would have been highly literate without being monstrously original. As an officer of one of the city's confraternities, he would also have interacted with men from a relatively diverse set of social backgrounds and been exposed to both erudite and popular musical repertoires.[22] All of this meant that he was remarkably immersed in and representative of Florence's vibrant urban culture and a keen observer of the street life and street culture of the city. As such, he was perfectly capable of holding diametrically opposing theories about how the city was built. By recalling Amphion, Pucci imagined the city as a work of art, an ideal design that was the result of careful planning and execution, effortlessly ordered by human reason, a solitary authority whose sweet music ordered stones into a perfectly proportioned city. In the second case, the city was created not by a single founding act but through the continuous dynamics of human conflict, commerce, and clatter, which were encouraged, amplified, mediated, and contained by the concrete architecture of the city square.

Pucci's poem, known as "Proprietà del mercato vecchio," displays a poetic rhythm that lends itself easily to oral recitation. It describes a series of overlapping social encounters in a celebration of Florence's old market square (Mercato Vecchio) and extolls its beauty over every other square in the entire world (figure 17). However, the picture that confronted the poem's audience is a series of frenetic, chaotic, highly competitive, lively, at times violent, always intense interactions of social groups and urban space. It stresses the riotous goings-on and noisy ebullience of the civic culture that flourished there, where all the messy elements that constitute urban society found a voice amid the chaotic architecture of commercial exchange.

He begins the poem by declaring that he has seen many piazzas, ones beautiful like that of Perugia but

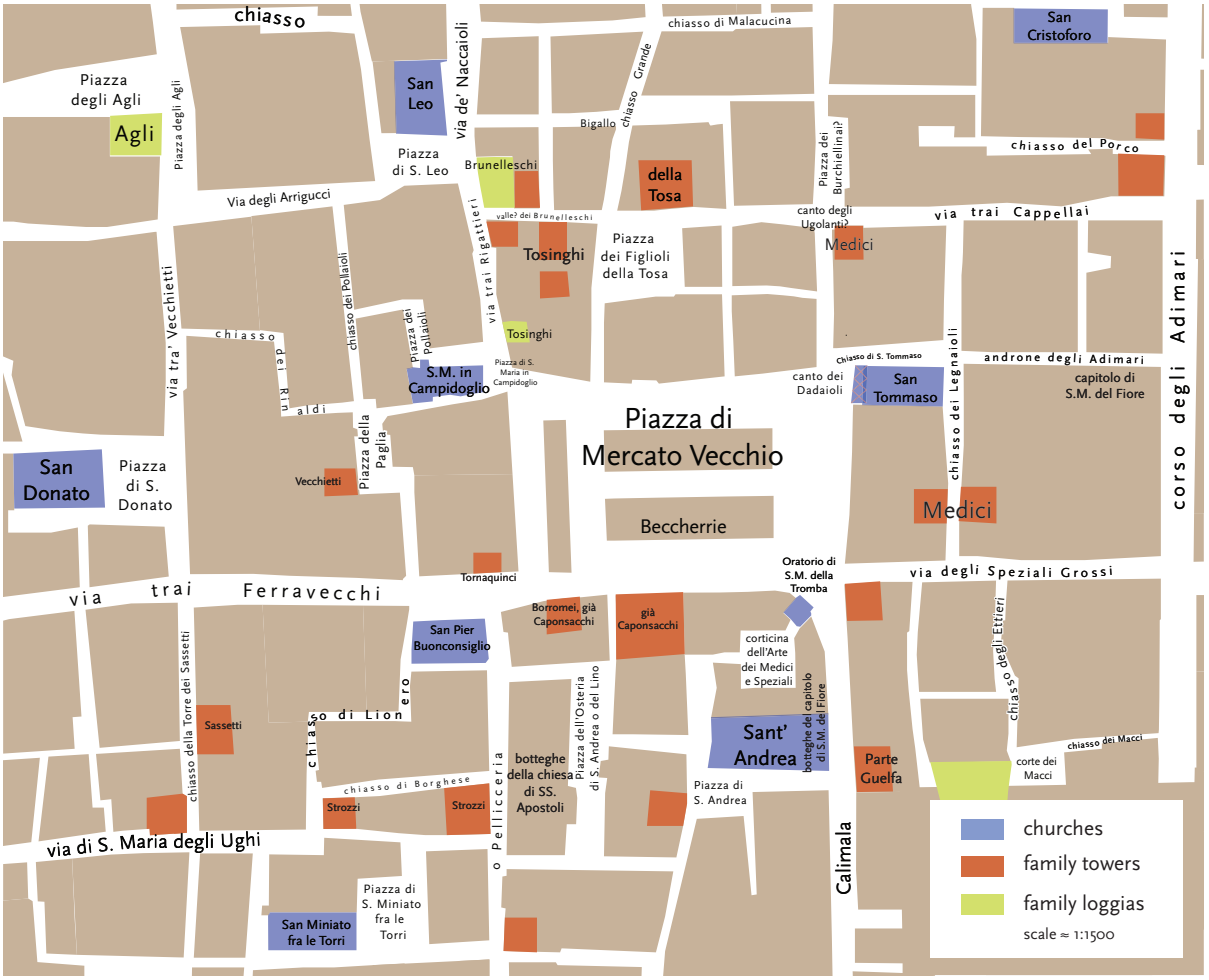


FIG. 17 Detail of a reconstruction survey of the area around the Mercato Vecchio during the nineteenth-century demolitions and representing the fifteenth-century street layout. Note the density of workshops, palaces, towers, churches, loggias, and other properties around the central market. Drawing by author after Guido Carocci.

also those, like the Campo in Siena, which are environmental disasters, where one wastes away in the winter and suffers the blazing sun in the summer.[23] But none can rival the beauty of the square that has inspired him to sing of it in verse.[24] Pucci goes on to describe the rich variety of characters that populate the market and the often raucous activities they engage in. There are artisans and vendors of all kinds, gentlemen, prostitutes, peasants, ruffians, and swindlers. Every morning the streets leading into it are jammed with carts and animals burdened with a ceaseless flow of provisions.[25] Across the arc of the poem's narrative, winter turns to spring, Carnival to Lent, and Lent to Easter, in which the transitions are expressed through a changing culinary abundance

that enlivens the feverish exchange. The poem ends by linking the culture of commerce to the ritual and rambunctious jousting and feasting of the city's young men in *potenze*, the city's festive youth brigades. The market was defined more by the practices that took place within it than the buildings and spaces that formed it. It was more important for Pucci to describe those things about the piazza that struck the multiple intersections of his senses; what he saw, certainly, but also what he felt, heard, tasted, even smelled (*sento*) in the market.[26] In this narrative the piazza was the end point of a vast circulatory regime of regional food production and consumption. In the piazza itself, well-stocked food vendors jostled against a vibrant commerce of fraud. Moneylenders' tables stood next to gaming tables.[27] The shrieks exchanged between garrulous female vendors who traded the vilest insults all day long as easily as they dispensed chestnuts clashed with the sounds of mocking banter of beautiful young girls selling all manner of flowers and fruit.[28] These lively and vulgar exchanges in the piazza are described as if they took place in the noblest garden, one that nourishes both the Florentine eye and taste.[29] Gentlemen and women look on as swindlers and sellers, prostitutes and pimps, cantankerous rustics and *bons vivants*, delivery boys and scabrous beggars, all become entangled in scuffles.[30] One hears the curses of those brawling ruffians, whose wheezing, puffing, and violent blows competed with singing idlers and songbirds in cages.[31] And if, by chance, one of these unruly characters kills his rival, it will only temporarily shatter the beauty of the piazza, and in the meantime one can still sing and contentedly fritter away the time as arrogant youths gamble and cavort next to a wretched humanity so poor that they go naked with only their heels in their ass in the coldest winter, begging for the most meager sustenance in the middle of so much alimentary abundance and acoustic mayhem.[32] Meanwhile, festive brigades with lances and bells (*Coll'aste in man, forniti di sonagli*) greet their chosen lords as they ride out to the city's bridges to stage mock battles, where many end up in the river. Soaking in the frigid air, they return to the piazza, adorned in borrowed finery, where they dine at others' expense to the sound of trumpeters (*sonatori di stormenti*) playing and troubadours (*cantatori*) singing a genre of songs to which this poem most probably belonged.[33] The poem's end highlights the fleeting nature of the reign of these ironic kingdoms and their elected emperors, whose tenure is over as soon as their purses are emptied. He describes how they would soon be drinking water and eating dried bread, lamenting the memory of wine, capons, and partridges. The final image is a conventional moral warning about how the ritual rise and fall of such artisan brigades is governed by the rotating wheel of Fortune and its ceaseless cyclical caprice, a satirical reference to the inevitable triumph and tragedy Fortune bestowed in much grander epic narratives of a much wider cultural geography.

Pucci is able to enliven the square in a way that allows the reader to imagine the dynamic bodily experience of premodern civic spaces. The *mercato* represents a social and political space overabundant in goods, people, sounds, smells, and riotous activity (figures 18, 19). This jumbled acoustic phenomenon evokes the lively oral culture of a premodern city, destined as it was to be recited, sung, copied, or repeated in the city's public squares. All the messy elements that constitute urban society found a voice amid the chaotic architecture of commercial exchange. It was a poem representing one type of auditory environment through its performance in the context of another, making the soundscape both the subject and the

FIG. 18 Mercato Vecchio, c. 1880, before the demolitions. On the left is the Loggia del Pesce, designed by Giorgio Vasari, before its relocation. Note the dominating view of both the bell tower and the dome of the cathedral, a view that is now virtually obstructed by the redevelopment of the site. Photo: Alinari / Art Resource, N.Y.

FIG. 19 Workshop of Giorgio Vasari, view of the Mercato Vecchio in the sixteenth century, showing the variety of formal and informal activities that still took place there. Sala di Gualdrada, Palazzo Vecchio. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, N.Y.

medium of the narrative itself. Such a soundscape, however, was in direct contrast to the absolute social harmony invoked by the myth of Amphion. Instead of a single author commanding men in unison, Pucci represented the market as an expansive social space that enveloped the full range of urban heterogeneity. That heterogeneity is expressed as the sound of commercial exchange competing with the acoustic language of daily social relations, from the wealthy to the naked and entirely destitute.

In describing the market, Pucci concentrates on the seasonal provisioning of foodstuffs, the abundance of production and consumption, and the pursuit of meals both grand and meager to evoke both olfactory and taste sensations. But it is primarily the noisy activities of competitive trade and commerce, fraud and physical scuffles, that inspire him to set the market to the rhythms of verse. In light of these coarse and at times questionable activities, it is difficult to discern just what it was that Pucci found so beautiful and compelling about the Florentine Mercato Vecchio. The apparent chaos at first appears to completely undermine his claim for its paramount beauty. Pucci lived at a time before beauty could exist as an aesthetic quality based on the solely formal qualities of things, and this may help to explain the apparent contradiction between his hyperbolic claims and his dissonant description, where exaggeration, parody, and caricature are in play throughout. Such a reading of the poem in historical terms, taking seriously but not literally what it tells us about its times, is a productive way of gaining perspective on street life in the early modern city, where the absence of sustained popular media resources obscures the vitality of daily life. Although a literary construction, narratives like this one performed the critical task of staging how—in grotesque or comic terms—urban society came to terms with its relationship to and the part it played in constructing the urban environment. Their importance, therefore, for historical investigation cannot be overstated. They do not give rise to a history of facts so much as generate a representation of historical experience, where attitudes and assumptions become the subject of ridicule, mock praise, and biting critique. Urban stories, ones like this one that were likely told and retold, enable us to understand the city as a sociospatial construction in ways that may not correspond to the traditional domains of architecture and urban history but were integral components of the construction and functioning of the built environment.

Historically, the Mercato Vecchio figured prominently in the daily lives of Florentines. Legally, it was among the oldest and most important public spaces of the city.[34] It was also the geographic center, the site of the Roman forum, the zone of prostitution, and the heart of daily social life. To Pucci, this piazza was more valuable, more dignified, more esteemed, and more precious than any other piazza.[35] The beauty of the square came not from its geometric or visual harmony but from its discordant *functional virtue*. In order to support this claim, let me return to Pucci's claim for beauty at the beginning of the poem, noted above: "But these piazzas and others, if I clearly discern, are nothing like the fruits and beauty of the one that gives government to the people."[36] Although it is rather awkward in English, I have translated "dà governo" here literally as "gives government" to emphasize the political allusions that Pucci is embedding in the functioning of the market. However translated, it is clear that the author is referring to some kind of regulatory power that exists as an attribute of the square's physical dimensions, an attribute that has real effects on the behavior of those acting within it. This idea leads directly to a fundamental debate

about the coercive potential of architectural or urban design to elicit certain kinds of behavior and regulate urban relations. It begs the question of how much our physical environment determines our social identities and how much agency or power inhabitants have to resist, transform, or manipulate their surroundings by impressing themselves, physically and psychologically, upon them.

This is why I believe "dà governo" is a remarkable statement. What exactly does Pucci mean when he declares that the most beautiful square in the world literally "gives government" to the people? Pucci's claim for the square's beauty and nourishing power appears at first to be a typical example of the formulaic hyperbole of a Florentine partisan, but it becomes something absolutely mystifying when we find out just what is actually going on there. Beauty in this configuration must be linked not so much to viewing pleasure as to moral action. It is not purely surface delight or compositional unity that makes for a beautiful urban space; it also has to be teeming with movement and voices. It is beautiful because it is a dynamic process rather than a finished product. Not only did the piazza nourish the world, it seems ("Mercato Vecchio al mondo è alimento"), but it also indicated how people ought to behave as a political community because proximity forced people to confront others, to recognize their roles as both actors and audience, to recognize differences through economic exchange, and to make space for both friends and foes. As a result, urban space took part directly in governing the city. Architecture played a didactic role. For Pucci, the piazza's value as urban space lay in its direct involvement in civilizing urban society through a forced confrontation with social diversity that contained the potential to regulate itself.[37] Pucci thus points to a crucial historical link between the city as a series of buildings and spaces and the city as a social phenomenon, between *urbs* and *civitas*.

But Pucci's claim that the square had the power to order and regulate Florentine society is immediately undermined by the apparent chaos that reigns there. From where does his faith in the civilizing power of social space emerge? What does he hear in the voices of quarreling vendors, the wheezing and puffing of those whose scuffles sometimes lead to blows and brawls, the frenetic trade, fraud, begging, borrowing, stealing, desiring, singing, and storytelling? It is my belief that, at the civic heart of a city whose politics was the result of a robust dialogue of conflict and consensus, universal claims and naked self-interest, Pucci was translating those continual negotiations from the council halls of the state to the forum of public life. In doing so, he displays no romantic sentimentality about civic life in the market, no patronizing moralism toward the petty crimes of a desperate underclass, and no fawning admiration of the elite. On the contrary, he celebrates this diversity. It was precisely the fact that the piazza was the site of open exchange, crowded as it was with the continual arrival of new bodies and products, that gave it its imperfect but effective regulatory power. Everyone belonged there, and everyone had a stake in the functioning of the market. Even the female peasants bringing milk and fowl from their wretched dwellings among clumps of mud became "neighbors" (*vicini*) to Florentine citizens when they arrived in the square.[38] This was not a casual concept but one loaded with meaning. The term "neighbor" carried with it powerful associations within the nexus of Florentine social relations: relatives (*parenti*), friends (*amici*), neighbors (*vicini*).[39] Such terms were never neutral. Neighbors were part of an extremely ritualized mode of behavior, and access to such categories of social relations was

constantly negotiated in space and time. Class differences were not erased in the square—they were set in stark relief—but no one was excluded and everyone had a role, however detestable or pitiful, to play.

Written by someone who would have been present at, if not directly participating in, official political debates, the poem could also function as an ironic critique of Florentine political practices. Although Florentine republican rhetoric was universalistic in its claims to represent the people of Florence, Pucci would have been fully aware of how the city's political culture excluded certain groups (magnates, women, foreigners, the poor) legally, while contending forces sought endlessly to expand and contract access to real political power.[40] Pucci's market, however, countered this with an idea of public space that forced the confrontation and recognition with, if not the love of, all manner of social groups. The "beauty" this offered might be a grotesquely ironic mirror to the ideals of republican universalism and its intimate interest in regulating economic activities. It was clearly an ambivalent beauty, but one that could exist in real space, a space that could tolerate human heterogeneity. The piazza was flexible enough to accommodate this and even minimize extreme violence. A murder would stain the square's beauty, but it could be isolated by the stubborn force of the practices of daily life to persist in spite of it. Instead, idling bodies still sing as the persistent rhythms of daily life counter and literally drown out the eruptions of periodic violence, recalling the civilizing power of music. Such beauty was never morally pure but was, nevertheless, profoundly resilient. Pucci displays a deep sympathy for the weaknesses of his fellow compatriots, and he understands how even tricksters deserve a place at the table. In its stubborn refusal to separate the entire range of social classes living cheek by jowl or even distinguish between bankers and gamblers, the mercato provided the space not for some misplaced social cohesion but for the expansive inclusiveness of a more chaotic and variegated civic belonging. Whatever the chaos of the piazza, the more people who inhabited it, the more effective its civilizing power became, the more "good government" it produced through the interaction of bodies and space. This is evident from the way the piazza acted as a site for the economic exchange of food, goods, and accumulation of profit, but also as the place of social and ritual exchange between diverse social groups—both the naked and the elegantly dressed. Both of these creative acts were in a constant state of aggressive tension that was representative of the desire of late medieval Italian communal governments to legislate a morally upright, beautiful, unencumbered, and productive city in which they were, inevitably, forced to confront the unavoidable task of actually negotiating the opacity of urban spaces, filled as they were with the interests and belongings of endlessly contentious rival groups.

Although public spaces were meant to be physically accessible, they were filled with legislation. Pucci's market represents the concrete corollary to the forces and laws that sought to control the activities that occurred there.[41] This desire to regulate space, however, which pervades the statutes of the city and its guilds, seems to lie dormant in the background of the poem. Nowhere in the poem does the voice of authority impose itself explicitly upon the vigorous competition between sellers, beggars, brawlers, strollers, and vagrants of both genders and all classes. In fact, it could also be read as an overturning of legislative order, beginning as it does during Carnival, when such ritual disruptions of hierarchical authority

performed their social critique. Order, such as it exists, seems to come, literally, from the ground up and the collective experience of the cycles of social and religious seasons, distinguished and unified by the changing landscape of food. Such experience was embedded in the square itself and acknowledges that the laws of fortune were far more powerful and inevitable than any drafted by mortal hands.

Pucci's idea of the cacophonous beauty of the piazza dispels any nostalgia one might have for a lost sonorous past represented by the harmonic construction of Thebes in the myth of Amphion, but it maintains the centrality of sound in the production of space. Urban pandemonium embodied the antithesis of Amphion's carefully organized city. The dissonance between the claims for universal beauty and the boisterous and chaotic social exchanges that characterized the market would have generated a great deal of sympathy and derision on the part of listeners. All of the noisy ebullience and unruly mischief described would have resonated, literally, with the walls of the city to create a dialogue with the very audiences who would have recognized and participated in such activities. When performed in Florence, the poem would have offered a narrative self-portrait of the most dissonant acoustic practices of those it addressed, and would likely have received the very exuberant responses it describes. Various elements of the poem generate a complex series of relations with the acoustic dimensions of the city. Nowhere is the market visually described. Instead it is anchored in space by reference to the four churches that sit at each corner, at the intersections of the streets that connect the market to the rest of the city and the sources of its wares (figure 20).[42] These, literally, are the properties of the square, disposed of in two lines, not seen, but heard or felt (*sento*). Ironically, this piazza has left the weakest visual imprint on the rhetoric and representation of Florentine urban space. Though it was destroyed in the grand urban renewal projects of the nineteenth century, its legacy remains in various fragments: from meticulous planimetric reconstruction of the dense urban properties that surrounded it, to nostalgic absence in the photographic documentation of its demolition, to linguistic memorialization in the neoclassical inscription that celebrates modernity's brutal triumph over the squalor of a nineteenth-century urban slum (figures 21–23).[43]

The subplot of the competing youth brigades upon which the poem ends is an important element of how urban space was the product not only of policies but also of use. As the youth brigades move in and out of the square, desiring and consuming its products, the market space becomes a festive space, reconfigured in its symbolic import as the site where rituals of social bonds were enacted. The neighborhood confraternities that participated in these rituals were made up of artisans who were not part of the city's elite but who participated in the mock formation of territorial kingdoms throughout the city, over which they would rule at certain festive occasions. They would lay claim to their neighborhood by processing through it to ritually mark its borders, where they would often fight battles with rival gangs. And they would organize contests and meals that were paid for by the largesse of wealthy patrons.[44] Although these brigades would become more formalized and increasingly connected to charity and dependent on the power of dominant families such as the Medici oligarchs of the fifteenth century and the dukes of the sixteenth, losing some of their independent carnivalesque subversion of the political order, Pucci seems to be linking their ritual

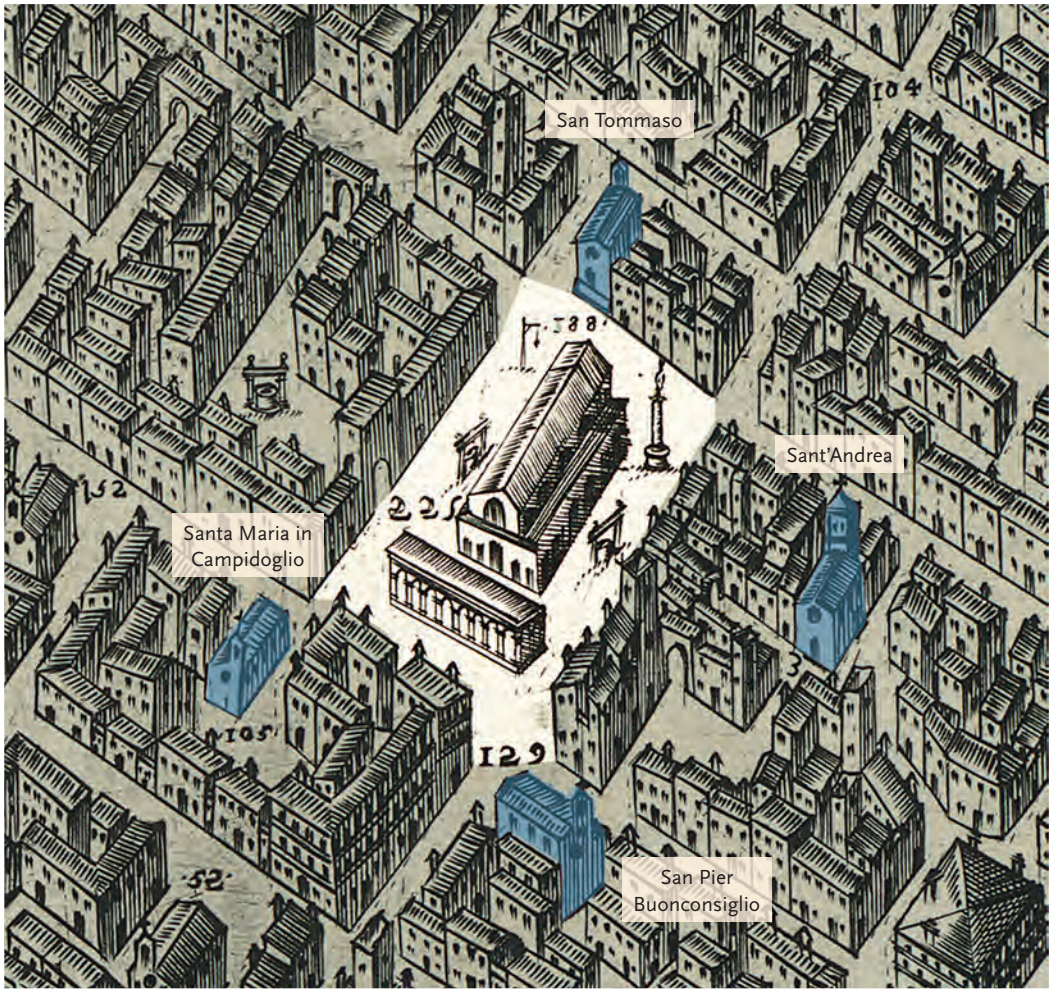
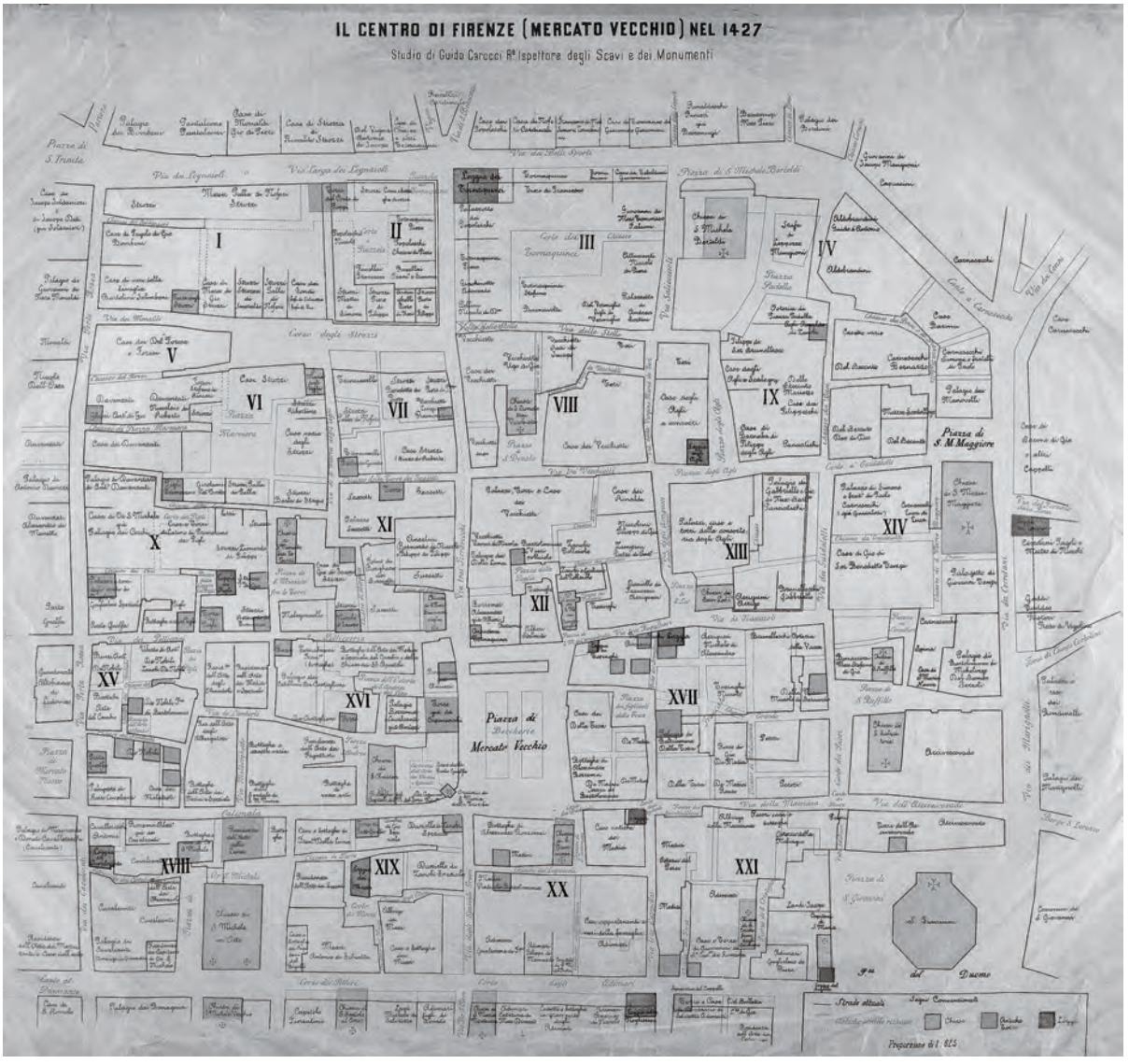


FIG. 20 The four anchoring churches of the Mercato Vecchio: San Tommaso, Sant'Andrea, San Pier Buonconsiglio, and Santa Maria in Campidoglio. Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

inversion of the city's power structure to his contention that the social life and spatial configuration of the piazza had a part to play in governing the city. In other words, their upending of social hierarchies was an important satirical disruption of the established order. The market, therefore, becomes an ironic microcosm of, reflection of, and corrective to the larger political organization of the city.

The piazza described by Pucci literally refuses to be silenced. It was both the landscape *and* the soundscape of the piazza that allowed him to analyze space, to load it with meaning and emotions, and to make it available for some kind of "aesthetic" appreciation. None of its sounds were meaningless; all formed part of a larger auditory landscape, an urban sensual dialogue, whose rhythms formed a certain type of poetics of space, a collective expression of the tension of the conflicting sounds that characterized the early modern piazza. Architectural historians are often trained to search for Amphion's elusive city of



Thebes and actively attempt to clear away the historical debris that stubbornly clings to Pucci's market square. So we naturally look to authorities, planners, intellectuals, and architects to explain the visual rhetoric of beautiful walls and stones. But such tendencies cannot explain the tumultuous beauty that Pucci felt

FIG. 21 Guido Carocci, reconstruction survey of the Mercato Vecchio overlaying the building lines of the nineteenth century onto those of the fifteenth and embedding property ownership data from the 1427 *catasto* (tax census). Courtesy of Archivio Storico del Comune di Firenze.

FIG. 22 Piazza del Mercato Vecchio, c. 1890, during the demolitions that would transform it into the present Piazza della Repubblica. The exposed structures still give a sense of the densely packed living arrangements persisting well into the nineteenth century. Photo: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz—Max-Planck-Institut.

and heard more than he saw in the disorder of the market square.

I was forced to confront this tendency directly by a chance interdisciplinary encounter, where I was asked about the disastrous state of Florence's current central market square (figure 24). Naturally, I reacted with horror at the sight of this daily amassing of organic and industrial waste. I exhibited the proper disdain toward the clutter and refuse typical of marketplaces, the unwelcome intrusion of motorized vehicles, signs, bodies, and mechanized noises that obscured the beauty of *my* ideal of Florence and destroyed the "public" experience of dignified historical urban space. However, it was that very clutter that, to a social geographer, represented the last spasms of an active communal life in a city choking on its own artistic past.[45] The mess of the market was the last public defense against the encroaching private terraces of restaurants catering to the needs of tourism rather than those of a vanishing local community. I realized that the construction of the tourist's gaze, the architectural historian's gaze, and my gaze were all colluding to deny space for the necessary aspects of

FIG. 23 Arch of the Piazza della Repubblica, which replaced the demolished area around the Mercato Vecchio. The *mercato* had been for centuries the center of social and commercial life in the city and was sited on the original forum of the Roman castrum. The inscription reads, "L'ANTICO CENTRO DELLA CITTÀ DA SECOLARE SQUALLORE A VITA NUOVA RESTITUITO." Photo by author.

FIG. 24 The clutter of daily life in the Mercato Centrale, Florence, the center of market life in the city since the nineteenth century, now suffering from its systematic dismantling under the forces of modern tourism. Photo by author.

urban disorder that were fundamental to the production of those spaces in the first place. And so I realized that premodern Florentines, like Pucci, already understood this dialectic of *urbs* and *civitas* and how the antagonism between them, between bodies and buildings, was the engine of social life.

Pucci, however, does not seem to have been fazed by the contradiction implied by these two images of the city and would never have felt compelled to resolve it. Cities were always defined precisely by the ability of citizens to exist simultaneously in an imperfectly functioning social and architectural configuration *and* by an imagined ideal society of perfect socio-spatial proportions. The interpretations of the Amphion myth in commentaries on Dante's *Divine Comedy* show how the building blocks of a city were stones *and* men, imbued with reason by the rhetorical force of Amphion's voice. Reason induced people to create an urban community whose values were reflected in its concrete surroundings. Walls became symbols; ideas became concrete building material. One's sensorial experience of the city was always both a physical and a mental exercise because Amphion's voice, the power of his words, was permanently linked to the walls with which the city was built.

Pucci understood this. It did not matter how the mercato was built. Its power lay in the way it reflected and imposed, however distortedly, a common, if messy, idea of urban justice. The civilizing power of

architecture was the result of the interaction between an urban dialogue and an urban spatial structure. The rhetoric of words was transformed into the rhetoric of stone, and the materiality of stone was transformed into the materiality of words.[46] The one was the symbolic alter ego of the other, where walls became human bodies and civic dialogue became urban design. What bound these modes together was sound; the power of speech, both the sweetness of a single voice and the confusion of many. Sonic harmony created a spatial one, motivating bodies, inspiring minds, all of which resonated off the very stones of the city. Words uttered had both meaning and a spatial echo. Sounds, in the urban environment, did not completely disappear at the moment of their pronouncement. They reflected off walls and left traces in texts, maintaining, imperfectly perhaps, the memory of the dialogue that arranged those stones in the first place and continued to resound within them.

In Florence, the dialectic between order and disorder, harmony and dissonance, played out within and around the official soundscape that successive regimes constructed, primarily through the ringing of bells. This daily acoustic exchange continually overlaid Amphion's rhetorical voice onto the city through the repetitive modulations of an official messaging system that marked time and defined the borders of the city's legal, moral, and political jurisdictions. This acoustic regime remained relatively stable throughout the period of the republic, from the late thirteenth to the early sixteenth century, developing only in increasing complexity as time progressed and bells were added, lost, and recast. These were sounds that were intimately connected to the daily lives of Florentines, and they were, by and large, the objects of civic devotion. They gave structure to the urban environment through a dialectic of repetition and variation that was a fundamental element of the city's overall design. This particular aspect of the acoustic art of city-building lies between the two opposing but ultimately complementary practices that Pucci expresses: one ideal, transcendent, and harmonic, the other rather concrete and noisy. And although this investigation into the urban soundscape primarily concerns Florence, the development of a regular acoustic regime of mass communication, of marking time and prayer in the early modern city, was a near-universal phenomenon in the Christian West.

A Bell, a Bell Tower, a Rock, and a Hammer

As a way of introducing the main themes and interpretive methods used in this study, I would like to use the following four narratives—two historical and two literary—to illustrate the tension generated between competing ideas about harmony and discord, order and disorder, in the aural landscape. They foreground who had access to the constituent elements of the city's soundscape, when such access was granted or denied, and what constituted the proper character of the sounds that one heard in the city. They are also representative of the ways in which the soundscape can be excavated by attention to both the historical record and narrative invention, how the mechanisms of one can reflect and complement those of the other. Subjecting both to a representational analysis is not part of a search for historical facts, of piecing together fragments of the soundscape in a process of historical reconstruction. Such an investigation and reconstruction will be dealt with in the next chapter. Instead, the interpretive strategy introduced below reveals attitudes, desires, and assumptions about the meaning, experience, and critical importance of

FIG. 25 View of the Loggia dei Lanzi, originally a republican stage for ceremonial events, across the Piazza della Signoria. The round stone marker commemorating the spot where Savonarola and his two Dominican comrades were burned can be seen in the right foreground. Photo by author.

the ability to make noise and the power to interpret sound. As such, one finds that political conflicts and narrative humor share a great deal of similar attitudes, desires, and assumptions.

First, the stories.

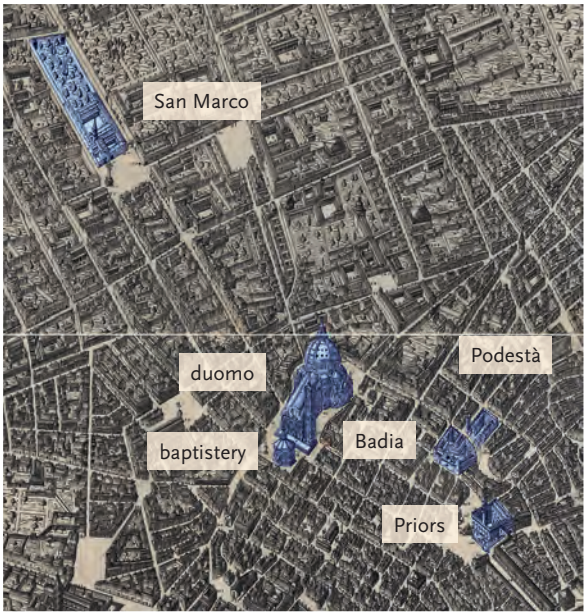
A Bell

On the 6th of April, 1498, the popular Dominican preacher Girolamo Savonarola, who would soon be burned as a heretic very near to where he now stood, was waiting in the rain for his Franciscan challenger, Giuliano Rondinelli, to join him in the city's main square, the Piazza della Signoria (figures 25, 26).[47] Growing tension in Florence between Savonarola's supporters and his enemies had led to open clashes, and so a trial by fire had been arranged. It was the result of competing claims of prophetic status in which there was much at stake for the millenarian prophet and radical political reformer's claims about his own divine mission and the city's eschatological destiny. In front of large crowds of their supporters, both friars were supposed to prove their own sanctity, and the other's falsity, by walking unscathed through fire. In the end, Rondinelli failed to appear, and so Savonarola tried to claim victory by forfeit. But in a city intensely divided between his partisans and detractors, Savonarola was forced to return to his convent of San Marco with an armed government escort, surrounded by his brothers, who had to protect him from many who felt tricked out of a good miracle. The next day, Palm Sunday, an angry mob set siege to San Marco and threatened to kill this false prophet (figures 27, 28).

FIG. 26 View across the Piazza della Signoria from the via dei Calzaiuoli toward the Palazzo Vecchio, the former Palace of the Priors. This is the privileged trecento viewpoint according to Trachtenberg's analysis. This is likely the position from which Goro Dati admired his merchant republic and its spectacular architecture. Photo by author.

As the mob charged into the square, the terrified Dominicans rang the convent's great bell, known as the Piagnona, or "wailer," in a desperate call for help (figure 29). Savonarola placed his faith in the bell's power to initiate the city's system of civic alarm and bring the force of authority to the square. But as Lauro Martines writes, "the minutes passed, then the hours, and no help came."[48] Having previously smuggled arms into the convent for just such an event, the friars put up stiff resistance, firing harquebuses propped on pulpits as Savonarola prayed hopelessly at the altar. Under threat of the wholesale destruction of their convent by an angry and hostile government, they finally surrendered.

Trials ensued, and Savonarola, along with two of his closest aides, was condemned and burned as a heretic in the Piazza della Signoria. His writings were banned, San Marco's great library was confiscated, and the convent was shut down. However, what was also at stake was the right to make noise. Fearing even to speak, Savonarola's supporters were left with the sound of the bell as the only means left to defend their message. The government had already decreed that Savonarola had to leave the city, and the streets were increasingly under the control of violent forces. According to Martines, the government decided not to send in its own militias, since they could not be trusted to side against the friars of San Marco. Such political manipulation of the crowd undermined the very power of Pucci's piazza to counter extreme violence with the culture of daily life. Savonarola's supporters were too frightened to answer the Piagnona's call for help. That call for help would also be the last sound it made before it too was condemned by the



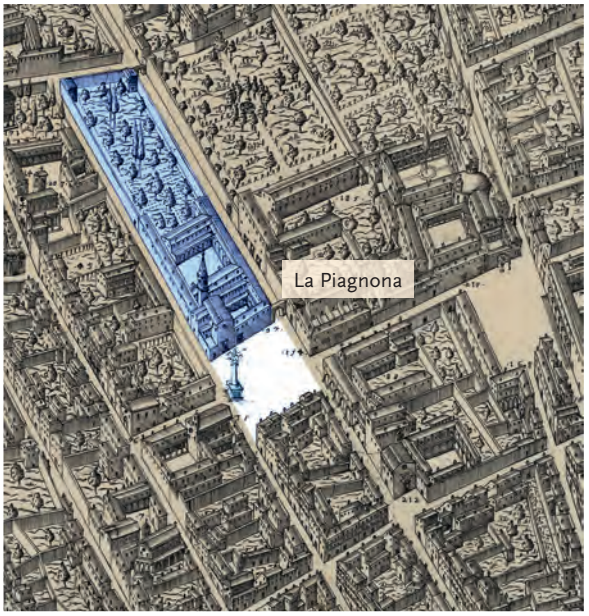


FIG. 27 (*top left*) The location of the monastery of San Marco in relation to the city's main institutions. Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

FIG. 28 (*top right*) The area around the monastery and piazza of San Marco, the scene of the attack on Savonarola's followers. Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

FIG. 29 (*right*) La Piagnona, the bell whose sound was so closely associated with the voice of Savonarola, now in the former chapter house of San Marco after its restoration. Photo by author.

authorities. Under pressure from anti-Savonarolan forces and in an atmosphere of backlash against the extreme piety of Savonarola's regime, the *signoria* (the city's executive council) ordered that the Piagnona was to be sent into exile. It was taken down from its tower, paraded through the streets of Florence to the taunts and jeers of the crowd, whipped along the way by the city's hangman, and finally banished to the Franciscan convent of San Salvatore al Monte, outside the walls of the city.[49]

FIG. 30 View of the bell towers of the Badia (*left*) and the Bargello (*right*) from Piazza San Firenze. Photo by author.

A Bell Tower

The Benedictine monastery known as the Badia stood just across from the city's courthouse, now known as the Bargello (figure 30). Founded in the tenth century, the Badia, which was originally built at the edge of the Roman city walls, was intimately enmeshed in civic politics. In 1307, levying a new tax on religious institutions to help pay for military operations probably sounded like a good idea to the cash-strapped Florentine government.[50] But when city officials arrived to collect the tribute, the insulted monks of the Badia closed their doors and rang their bell in alarm. Naturally, an angry crowd of poor workers, local ne'er-do-wells, and general riffraff (*malandrini*), supported by wealthy elites and angry merchants, rose up in anger and chased away and robbed the hapless officials. The government finally agreed to cut the tax in half, but not before it also decided to cut the monastery's bell tower in half, while a group of thugs sacked and burned parts of the abbey (figure 31). Politics as usual in late medieval Florence.

FIG. 31 New hexagonal bell tower of the Badia rising from its old foundations, reconstructed after 1330. Photo by author.

A Rock

In the 1568 edition of the *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, Giorgio Vasari recounts an episode from the life of the fifteenth-century painter Sandro Botticelli. A cloth weaver moves in next door to the artist and proceeds to assemble no less than eight looms inside his home. When they are set in motion, they create a tremendous clamor that "not only deafened poor Sandro with the noise of the treadles and the movement of the frames, but shook his whole house, the walls of which were no stronger than they should be, so that what with the one thing and the other he could not work or even stay at home."[51] Botticelli's repeated entreaties for him to stop fall on deaf ears because the weaver asserts that "he both would and could do what he pleased in his own house."[52] Having failed to persuade his neighbor with reason, Botticelli concocts a cunning plan. He hoists an enormous rock onto the roof of his house and balances it on the wall that separates him from his noisy neighbor (figure 32). This wall is higher and less stable than his neighbor's, so much so that the rock threatens to crash through his neighbor's roof and destroy his looms at the slightest tremor of the wall. To the terrified weaver's subsequent protests, Botticelli responds by quoting his own words, claiming that he too could and would do whatever he pleased in his own house. The story ends with Botticelli having successfully compelled the weaver to "come to a reasonable agreement and to be a good neighbor to Sandro."[53]

A Hammer

In a novella written by Franco Sacchetti at the end of the fourteenth century, Dante Alighieri is asked by a young knight of the Adimari family to make a public endorsement on his behalf with the city's executor in order to get him out of paying a fine assessed against him. Dante agrees to put in a good word and sets off to the palace (figure 33). But something strange happens along the way: not far from the Badia, in the district of San Piero, he hears something that he does not like at all (figure 34). Inside a workshop, a blacksmith is merrily singing Dante's *Divine Comedy*, using its rhythmic cadences to regulate the striking of his hammer. But he mixes up the verses and generally

FIG. 32 View of the Mercato Vecchio, showing the varying heights of individual buildings. Photo: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz—Max-Planck-Institut.

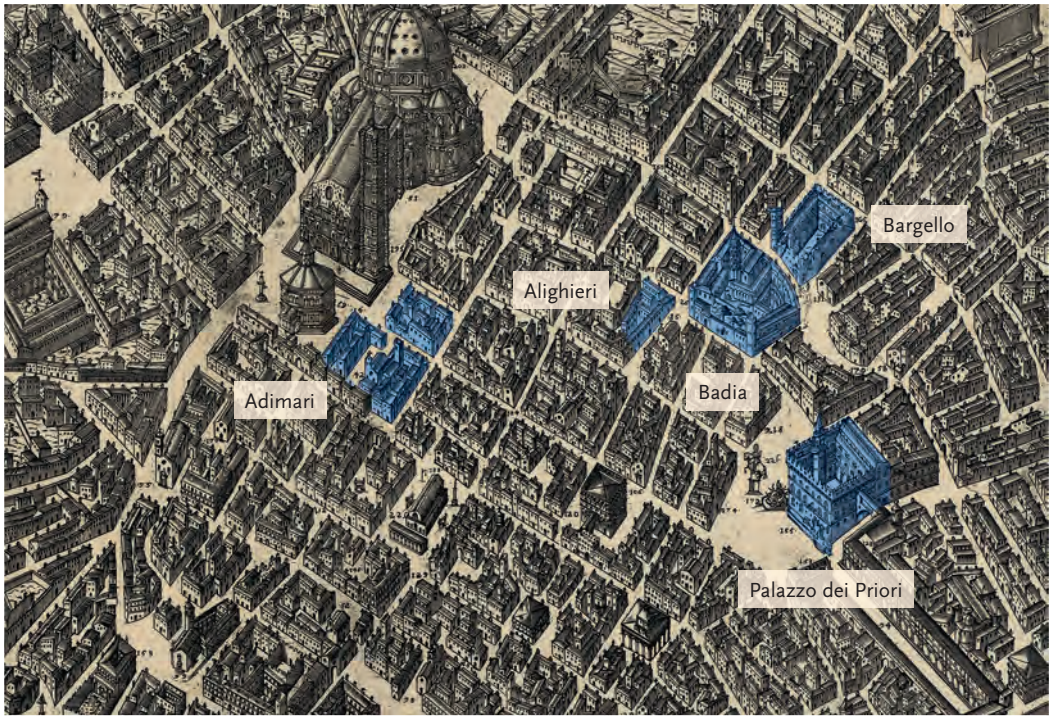


FIG. 33 Map highlighting the areas of the Adimari and Alighieri households. Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

FIG. 34 The old district of San Piero, a neighborhood that recalled the prerepublican city centuries before and predated the city's eleventh-century expansion. Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

FIG. 35 Andrea Pisano, Tubalcain (the first blacksmith), from the Genesis panels, west façade, campanile of the cathedral, c. 1330s. Photo by author.

hacks its syntax to pieces, so much so that Dante feels it as a personal injury (figure 35).[54] Without saying a word, he enters the shop and starts throwing the blacksmith's tools (*masserizie*), one by one, onto the street, first his hammer, then his tongs, then his scales.[55] When the blacksmith protests, Dante retorts, "If you don't want me to break your things, don't ruin mine!" How, the blacksmith wonders, could he have ever broken this mad stranger's tools? Dante replies, "You are singing the poem, but you are not reciting it the way I wrote it. I have no other trade, and you are destroying it for me."[56] Stupefied, the blacksmith gathers together his belongings in silence and returns to work.

As he continues to the executor's palace, Dante, still rankled by the incident, begins to think about how the knight would ride through the city on a horse,

FIG. 36 *Cavalcare largo* or the "arrogant knight" posed in the narrow via dei Cimatori, Florence. Giambologna, equestrian statue of Cosimo I, 1594, Piazza della Signoria. Photo by author.

his legs so widely extended that those passing him on the street would be forced to turn back, or, with their backs against the wall, suffer the indignity of polishing the tips of his shoes as he rode past (figure 36). As a result, instead of making a statement supporting his "friend," he denounces him for the crime of "riding widely" (*cavalcare largo*). The executor agrees that this is a grave crime indeed, and so, instead of having the fine against Adimari dismissed, Dante succeeds in having it doubled.

Four Stories

In all of these stories—two of which are fragments of larger historical events, and two of which are fictionalized accounts of real-life Florentines—the central theme around which the narrative hinges is the relative power to communicate with the city, to silence the voices and sounds made by others, and to control crucial elements of the city's soundscape and the meaning such sounds conveyed. Therefore, a closer look at what was at stake for Florentines in confronting the noises, and the silences, they encountered can also provide ways of navigating the thorny relationship between historical events and literary narratives. This is not to collapse the distinction between the two, but to listen to what they say about the urban acoustic "eventscape" in which they were produced, the audiences to which they were addressed, and the different but related strategies of representation that were put into play, whether in antagonistic political circumstances or in contemplative narrative exploration.

The Bell Tower

The bell tower of the Badia was an important acoustic transmitter in Florence and was deeply embedded in the daily sonic rhythms of prayer and work. Each Florentine day began with a complex series of exchanges between the towers of the Badia, the Bargello, and the Palazzo Vecchio—monastery, judicial courts, and legislative councils (figure 37). The Badia marked the early morning prayers that led to a dawn Mass with a series of rings, which was answered, according to statutes, by six muted rings of the bell of the Leone in the Palazzo Vecchio. The bell of the *podestà*, housed in the Bargello, would then begin with a triple ring sequence that was answered by the bell of the *popolo*

FIG. 37 A visualization of the Florentine morning ringing sequence, an exchange derived from the city's fourteenth- and fifteenth-century statutes. Photo by author.

in the Palazzo Vecchio. This extended series of acoustic exchanges between sacred and secular institutions legally marked the beginning of the day.[57]

When the government ordered the destruction of the Badia's tower in 1307, it literally silenced the monastery, prohibiting it not only from calling for help in times of crisis but from communicating with its community, and most important, marking time by ringing the canonical hours of prayer. Before mechanical clocks, the daily rhythms of monastic life were amplified by bells, so that their salutary sound encompassed the entire city. In exile, Dante placed this sound deep within the Florentine psyche and far back into the distant past. In *Paradiso*, canto XV, his great-great grandfather, Cacciaguida, laments the moral decline of the future city by remembering the past through the sound of the bell that marked the canonical hours of terce and nones from the campanile of the Badia (figure 38):

> Florence, within her ancient ring of walls
> That ring from which she still draws terce and
> nones,
> sober and chaste, lived in tranquility.[58]

For Dante, the sound of a distant golden age still echoed in the sound of a bell ringing more than two centuries later. Such a sound excavated the traces of the long-demolished ninth- to eleventh-century walls, which had been built on even remoter Roman foundations. In Dante's time, the Porta Santa Maria was likely one of the only concrete reminders of

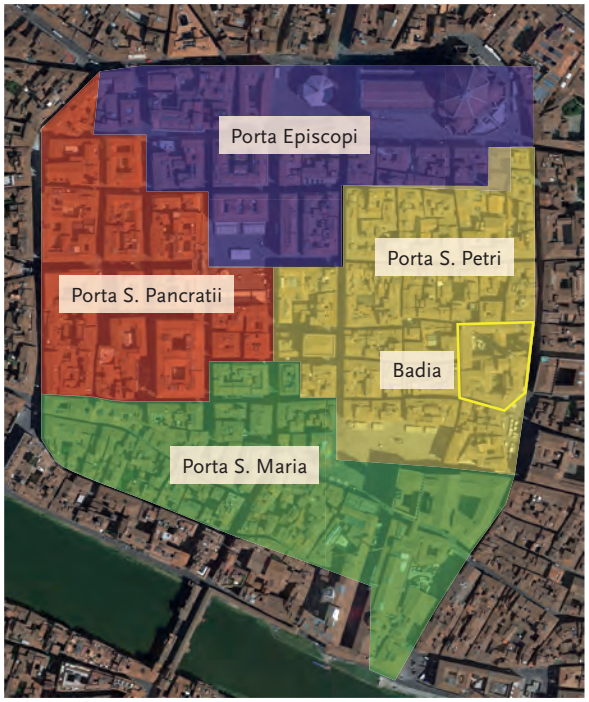


FIG. 38 The probable circuit of Dante's acoustic archaeology, tracing the walls of Matilde, the *cerchia antica* of 1078. This view shows the eleventh-century divisions of the city and highlights the Badia's position in it. Note that the Badia's bell tower, like that of many of the parish churches in Florence, was located at the margins of the territory it was imagined to bring into being (cf. figure 76). Note also that this circuit follows Fanelli's reconstruction of the eleventh-century walls, which extended to the river around the area of the present-day Uffizi. Compare to Davidsohn's reconstruction followed in figure 39. Author's reconstruction.

these walls (figure 39). The city at peace—sober and chaste—that lay within those ancient walls of Florence was long forgotten as it now spilled out from its original Roman grid into its medieval suburbs (figure 40). The Badia's bell not only dredged up the memory of a more peaceful urban community, it also defined the sober and chaste space that community inhabited by overlaying it onto the present. What is remarkable is the way in which Dante associated ancient Florentine virtue with a particular space and a certain sound. Not only did the bell of the Badia mark time throughout the day; the sonic rhythms that emanated from its campanile also excavated the memory of a privileged urban territory. Dante had belonged to this community, and the proximity of his family's properties to the Badia made the sound much more present in the silence of his exile (see figure 33).

Dante's city was a complex hierarchy in which bells defined limits and borders even when the actual structures, those city walls, were no longer there to guarantee them. They created space much more fluidly and convincingly than the complicated legal language needed to define the city's political jurisdictions. Its spatial signification was much more immediate and its temporal and spatial topography more easily apprehended. Bells enacted rituals of inclusion against borders of exclusion. It was precisely this space, the ancient urban core, that guaranteed, for Florentines such as Dante, a space that "was the proper setting for the enactment of honorable civic life" against the morally debased spaces of outlying neighborhoods.[59] It betrayed a certain anxiety about those who dwelt on the periphery by attempting to separate them off audibly from the ideal memory of the center. This was so even though Florentines of all classes, rich and poor, lived throughout the areas enclosed by the final circuit of walls. Dante was calling on the purging power of the Badia's bell to rid the center of any unwanted elements, even if it meant cleansing it through a type of sonic nostalgia.[60]

One such unwanted element may have been the concentration of industrial wool production in the very area of the city in which Dante lived. Around the area of San Martino, which was right next to his beloved Badia, wool workers toiled to the sound of a very different bell (figure 41).[61] Its distinct sound would have linked this centrally located but economically

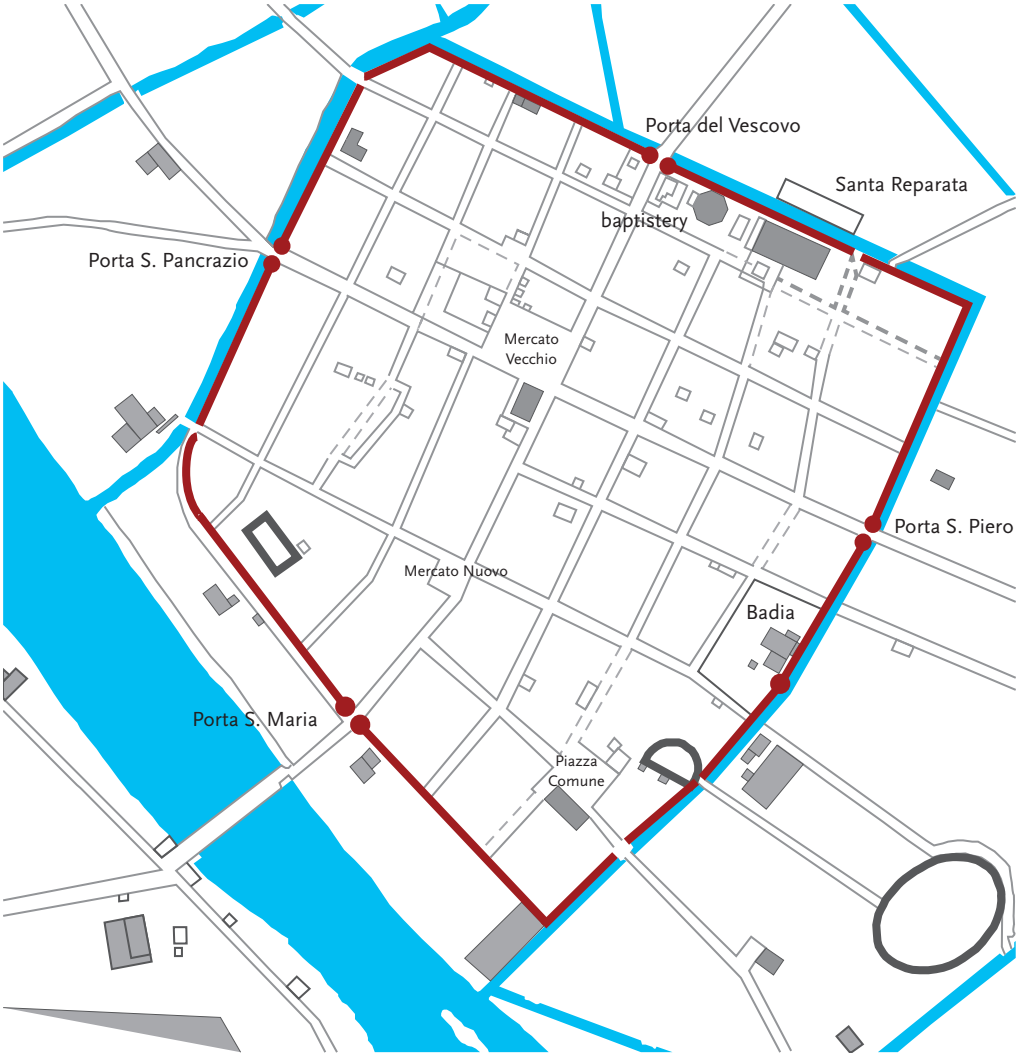


FIG. 39 Map of the eleventh-century walls, showing the location of the city's old gates. The Porta Santa Maria stood along the city's most important trade axis and continued to structure the collective memory of Florentines as the location of the first civic bell that assembled the citizens in the thirteenth century, the military bell that accompanied Florentine troops out to battle, and the place associated with the Buondelmonte murder. Plan by author after Davidsohn.

isolated zone to the other peripheral zones of wool production that surrounded Dante's chaste and sober center. It would have created an entirely different symbolic territory even within the jurisdiction of the bell of the Badia. These bells were part of an elaborate mechanism that attempted to circumscribe the urban experience of subjected workers. They represented an acoustic marginalization of one kind of labor located in spaces within the more general rhythm of opening and closing workshops that sounded from the Badia. Therefore, the sound of a bell could dissociate a space from its own location and set it adrift in space as part of a network of socio-spatial marginalized zones of segregated labor. The persistence of terce and nones was the power of the bell to evoke the memory of a wished-for past, while at the same time it excluded

FIG. 40 Roman grid within twelfth- and fourteenth-century wall circuits, showing the placement of the gates of Florence after its fourteenth-century expansion. Reconstruction by author.

other spaces created by the sound of other bells or superseded and redefined the spaces created by those very same bells ringing for other reasons.[62]

For Dante, the memory contained within the sound of the bell gave it the power to purge the present of the kind of fractious violence that led to his exile in 1301 and was still plaguing a besieged regime in 1307 that was struggling to construct a civic acoustic landscape as part of its efforts to maintain political control. When the government ordered the destruction of the Badia's tower, it not only silenced the monastery but also created a temporal void (figure 42). Dante's early commentators consistently pointed out that the Badia, in addition to marking all the hours of the day, also regulated labor, marking the opening and closing of workshops throughout the city.[63] Therefore, the city awoke, went to work, ate, prayed, and returned home, all to a familiar sound that bound them together in space, sanctified their labor, and brought the past vividly to life. Perhaps

FIG. 41 The church of San Martino in the sixteenth century after it was reoriented, and its proximity to the Alighieri ancestral properties, the Badia, Bargello, and the Palace of the Priors (Palazzo Vecchio). Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

it was this bond that the government tried to break when it ordered the destruction of the tower. Silencing such an important aural landmark would have had dire consequences for the city's daily schedule and the government's ability to effectively organize its citizens and transcend the lure of rival factions. But the ruling regime, which was struggling to lay its own acoustic foundations, would have held different associations when they heard the bell ring out of sequence; for them it would have brought back bitter memories of bloody conflict against Dante's political allies less than a decade before.

As historian Robert Davidsohn has written, bells functioned as the primary medium of mass communication in an age before printing.[64] It is not surprising, therefore, that the regime had spent enormous sums on the casting of a giant bell that was completed that very year. Weighing in excess of sixteen thousand

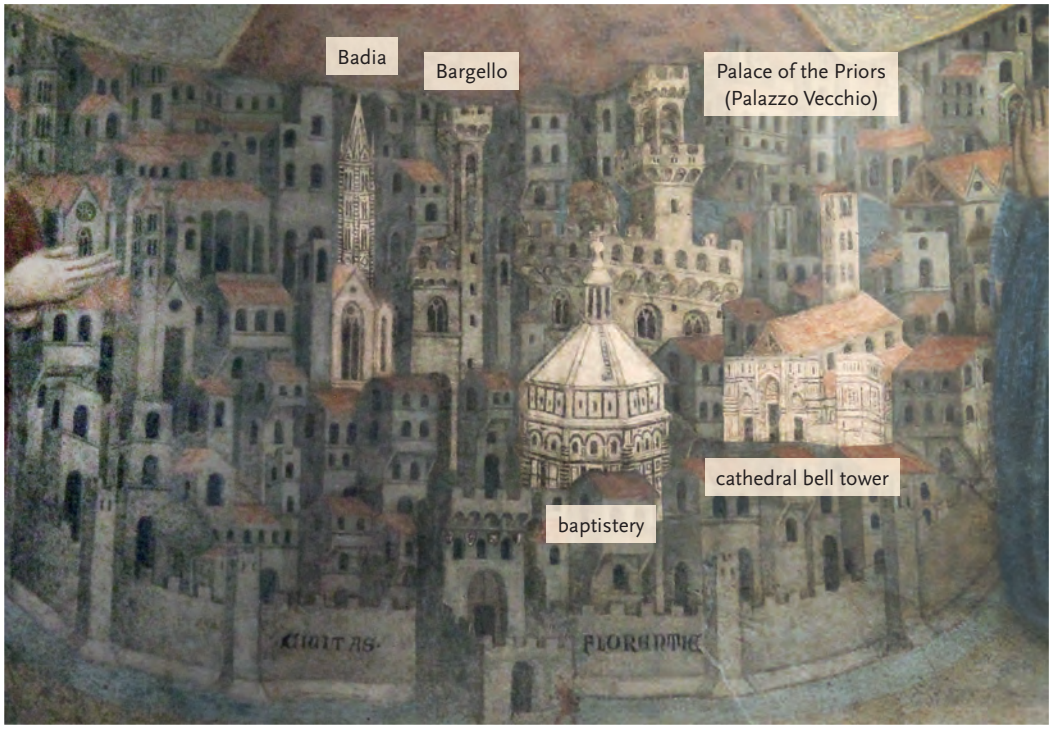


FIG. 42 A detail of the Bigallo fresco highlighting the city's principal bell towers. Note that the cathedral's new campanile was under construction and only reaches the height of the unfinished façade. The tower rising behind the new cathedral is likely the old bell tower of Santa Reparata, which was not demolished until the 1350s. Photo by author.

pounds, it waited in the piazza since the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio wouldn't be complete until 1315.[65] The new civic soundscape was still under construction, and the Badia may have been a casualty of exuberant mismanagement, because the new bell was destined to bring the entire expanded urban polity together within a single jurisdiction, uniting ancient center with periphery and dismantling the ancient boundaries over which the Badia guarded. However, by 1310, the aural confusion of a silenced and much loved bell, the glaring absence of a suitable tower to showcase the new one, and the extensive rebuilding campaign of the monastery may have played a part in the government's change of heart as well as the assumption that this sound belonged to the larger communal soundscape of the whole city. The Council of One Hundred (*consiglio dei cento*) set aside funds to help the Badia rebuild its bell tower in 1310 (completed in 1330), and a new bell was cast in 1313 (figures 43, 44).[66]

This architectural resolution hints at what would become, I believe, an acoustic strategy on the part of the Florentine government. It also speaks to the complicated relationship between successive popular governments and the Benedictines of the Badia. When councillors were being harassed by their political foes, the monks had rented them space to hold their councils in 1285. In the same year, the commune required the monks to rebuild their church so that its decrepit state did not embarrass the newly rebuilt city courts across the street. Conversely, in 1298 and again in 1301, the commune threatened to drive a street right

FIG. 43 The hexagonal campanile of the Badia seen from the cupola of the cathedral, Florence. Photo by author.

through the heart of the Badia to connect the civic grain market (which had been appropriated from the monks in 1240) to the Bargello, a move that would have required the total demolition of the bell tower (figure 45). After the government was forced to pay restitution for initial demolitions in 1301, its conciliatory mood in 1310 is understandable.[67] However, the decision to help the monks rebuild their tower signals an alternative strategy that harnessed the inherent unifying power embedded in the sound of bells. Instead of silencing them, the government amplified their sound. When the tower of the Badia was finally rebult by 1330, the daily morning sonic exchange between regime and monastery, which punctuated the entire day, represented a hard-won political lesson. Instead of the usual antagonistic policies of urban planning through architectural demolition, the government used sound not to challenge the Badia but to harmonize itself with an institution to which Florentines felt a strong historical affinity. As a result, the response of the commune's bells to the Badia every morning acknowledged the monastery's integral role in the Florentine soundscape, signaled the transition from sacred to secular authority, and sonically dramatized the unity of church and state (figures 46, 47).

The Hammer

By the time Dante the author was transformed by Franco Sacchetti into Dante the character, around the 1390s, the civic soundscape had fully integrated itself into the gaps in between the ecclesiastical ringing from both the cathedral and the Badia, carefully orchestrating ancient and new sounds. What the regime had learned was that bells were better at uniting people than dividing them, and that the future prosperity of the city could be bound to its past glory through the careful orchestration of ancient and new sounds.[68] Sacchetti picks up on the sensitivity of Dante's ear. By filtering Dante's poem through the discordant voice of a tone-deaf blacksmith, he contrasted the sonorous sound of city's audible past with the horrifying linguistic mutilations that resulted from the unrestricted circulation of stories in the oral culture of the premodern city. Dante's horror about his encounter with the blacksmith was hearing the inevitable distortions caused by the endless copying, rewriting, and

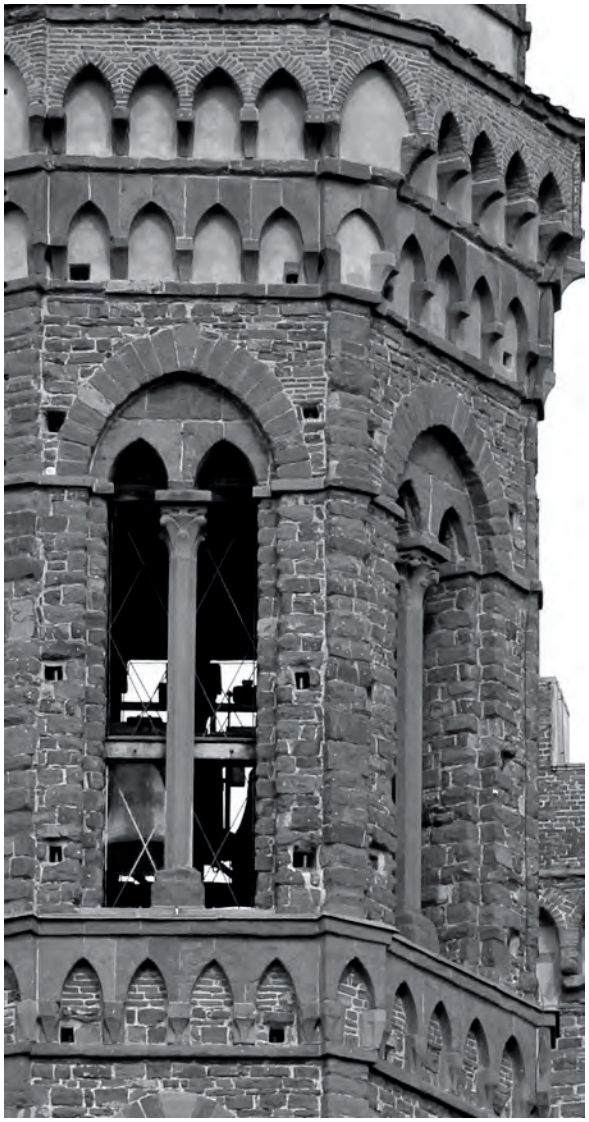


FIG. 44 The Badia's bell is visible in the lower left of this close-up of the Badia's belfry. Photo by author.

retelling to which popular texts were always subject (figure 48). The implication is that the smith was not reciting from the *Commedia* precisely, but was singing versions of it that he had heard in the piazza by *cantatori* who would continually reinterpret stories as they performed them. Heard more than it was read, the blacksmith's debased version of the *Commedia* was the result of the unregulated soundscape of Florence at the threshold of the Renaissance.

At first glance, Dante's chance aural encounter with the blacksmith appears to bear no relation to the framing narrative of the story nor to provide the basis for Dante's sudden change of mind about the wayward knight. At the turn of the fifteenth century, Sacchetti was using Dante and his poetry as a means to explore the complex class relationships in which wealthy, nonelite guildsmen, that fluid class of merchants, bankers, and judges, tried to distinguish themselves from both violent upper-class clans and the less affluent and more numerous lower guildsmen, like blacksmiths, who were legally enfranchised but did not participate directly in the large textile and international financial sectors that drove the Florentine economy. This context put Dante in a rather awkward position. Comparing his own métier to that of a metalworker, Dante protests against the debasement of one type of work by its acoustic contamination by another. The text is explicit about how the blacksmith was singing the poem just like a street performer. He was reciting verses he heard in the piazza by professional singers who would create a shared community by continually reinterpreting stories as they performed them, "experiment with additions and variations, improvise and insert digressions," as they adapted to different audiences.[69] In Florence, as Dale Kent has documented for the early fifteenth century, the piazza San Martino, which was located in front of the now-reoriented church, was the principal site of such storytelling (figure 49). But those additions and variations were tearing Dante apart. The personal injury he felt was caused by the loss of control over the medium through which he established his identity as

FIG. 45 View of via dei Cimatori, which ends abruptly at the walls of the Badia, whose tower can be seen above, with the bell tower of the Bargello (the former Podestà) just behind and to the right. Photo by author.

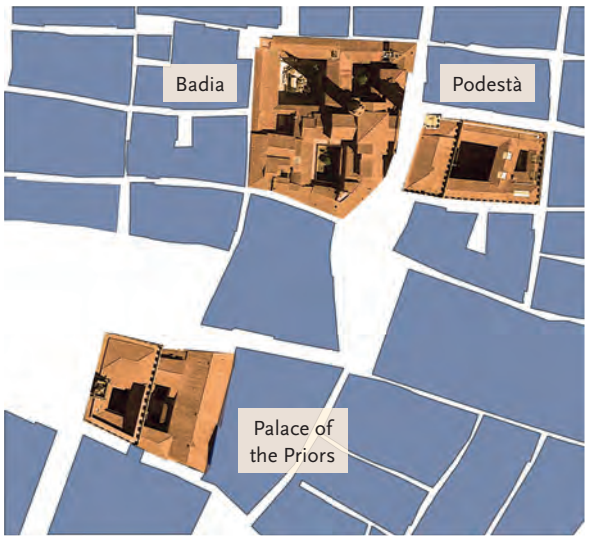


FIG. 46 Silhouette of the three towers that began the Florentine day. The daily dialogue between the Podestà (Bargello, *left*), the Priors (Palazzo Vecchio, *center*), and the Badia (*right*) formed the structural armature of the city's civic soundscape. Photo by author.

FIG. 47 Plan of the three institutions whose political relationships were embodied in the acoustic exchange between them that took place every day. The executive and legislative arms of the government resided in the Palace of the Priors (Palazzo Vecchio), the criminal and civil tribunals performed their duties in the Palace of the Podestà (Bargello), and the Benedictine monks maintained their urban presence and privileges by marking the canonical hours in their monastery, which predated both republican structures. Author's reconstruction.

a writer and citizen. Sacchetti was posing the question about how much control an author ought to have—even from the grave—over the consumption and distribution of his work and whether the reading and listening public had a right to adapt such texts to its social needs.

The smith's products, however, were for sale, and although there was a corporate mechanism to set prices, those products ended up in the world of economic exchange. Dante's poem, therefore, by Sacchetti's inference, is not the product of his labor but his tool, the medium through which he expressed his understanding and experience of the public world as a producing individual. It is the means by which he maintains himself, and he had as much right to hold on to it in the way any property holder might, as a particular configuration of words, by virtue of an early idea of what are now known as intellectual property rights.[70] Anyone could sing it, but there had to be some sort of standard of quality or fealty to the text and its author. Such restrictions would, theoretically at least, fall within the statutory purview of the regulation of labor and control of who could and could not perform their tasks in public spaces. We are left with the image of the smith, his chest inflated, probably searching for the bellowing force of a true Florentine *motto* (witticism) but only able to silently pick up his things and return to work. He would no longer sing Dante, the narrator tells us, but make do instead with singing the story of Tristan and Lancelot and leave Dante alone.[71]

If the poem was his tool, the problem for Dante was that his medium was a more refined version of the very vernacular language his compatriots were using to mangle it. The public realm in which such stories circulated favored the integrity of the community over

FIG. 48 A fourteenth-century image of Dante from the Magdalene chapel of the Bargello (*right*) confronts the fourteenth-century relief from the campanile of the cathedral depicting Tubalcain, the first forger of metal in Genesis 4:22. Note the blacksmith's tools arranged in the lower right of the relief. Author's reconstruction.

the integrity of the text or the meaning the author may have intended. Stories told in the public square were tailored to the immediate surroundings and the social situation at hand, both the *urbs* and the *civitas*. So if Dante could not control the content of his narrative, then perhaps he could claim ownership of its style. It was the manner in which the blacksmith sang it, after all, that so hurt Sacchetti's Dante, and Dante in real life condemned the "hideous speech" of his fellow Tuscans, mired as it was in their own stupidity.[72] In contrast, he sought to create a more elegant courtly vernacular style that would unite all Italians within a single linguistic community. And the attentive reader would have also enjoyed the multiple layers of irony that resulted from the fact that Sacchetti himself was rewriting in his own idiom a story recounted by the ancient writer Diogenes Laertius in his life of Arcesilaus. Arcesilaus, chastising a dialectic philosopher for his inability to repeat an argument properly, reminds him of Philoxenus, who, hearing a bunch of brickmakers singing his melodies out of tune, trampled on their bricks, declaring, "If you spoil my work, I'll spoil yours."[73] Sacchetti makes a subtle change to show how intellectual work was relevant not only to philosophical arguments but also to everyday urban experience. He also takes up the ethical question of the proper way to repeat poetic stories. And Sacchetti's readers would have been highly aware of the fact that his own writing style was far closer to the very colloquial idiom of the Florentine street that Dante's ears, both those of the fictional character and historical writer, were so horrified by in the first place. Sacchetti's story, therefore, points to the way in which both class-based identities and aesthetic

FIG. 49 The lost square of San Martino (highlighted) in the old neighborhood of San Piero. By the time of the production of the Bonsignori map of Florence in the 1580s, the square in front of the old entrance to San Martino had been partially filled in with new construction. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

questions were embedded within public streets and squares through the circulation of competing voices, the particular acoustic imprint of stories people gave voice to.

If the Florentine political class officially included the likes of our blacksmith, then Sacchetti's story also puts into play how an increasingly erudite middle class, the *popolo*, represented by Dante, tried to distance and distinguish itself from both the artisanal class of semiliterate workers, represented by the blacksmith, and the spatial arrogance of upper-class men, represented by the Adimari knight. The young knight, in the fashion of his class, was usurping the space of the commune by the way he rode through it on his horse, wrapping it around himself as if it were his own private mantle. Sacchetti was likely reflecting upon the Florentine *popolo*'s history as an antimagnate class, precisely when the republic's political leaders, in the wake of the Ciompi revolt in 1378, were closing ranks and creating an increasingly oligarchic regime where fewer middling guildsmen had access to real power. The smith, on the other hand, was participating in the communicative experience of public space. This is the realm that always had the potential, for those who sought to control the message, to corrupt and degrade monologic communication. Notably, Dante does not denounce the blacksmith to the executor for the crime of singing badly (*cantare male*). Instead, this episode triggers in him an awareness of the *knight's* relationship to space. Immediately after confronting the singing blacksmith, he begins to think about the nature of the urban spaces he is walking through: to whom

they belonged, how they should be addressed, and the proper means of moving through them. It was, after all, the setting and repository of those badly told stories, and therefore needed to be preserved, controlled, and maintained as much by laws as by social rituals and exchanges.

By placing Dante between two classes—one that appropriated space and one that appropriated texts—Sacchetti complicates Dante's class identity and its relationship upward to the disenfranchised elite and downward toward the nonelite ranks of the lesser guildsmen. Both ends of this vertical axis give Dante profound consternation and force him to reflect on the nature of two kinds of "publics." The space-cluttering knight encumbered and hindered public space as a network of movement that was supposed to facilitate trade and its control, while the ear-grating voice of the blacksmith corrupted a text that was part of a public culture of textuality to which, in Sacchetti's narrative world, the blacksmith did not belong. What emerges is a contradiction that illustrates clearly the rhetoric of Florentine republican statutes about public space and the constant desire to co-opt that space for private use by wealthy Florentine citizens. The condemnation of the knight presupposed the uninhibited circulation of bodies in public space, while the condemnation of the blacksmith demonstrated the necessity of obstructing the free flow of information through those very same spaces in order to protect a text that was, in practice, an aural public monument. In the perspective of the narrative, Dante's work inhabited the public square but was always in danger of being mangled and vandalized by the disorderly sonic forces at work there that threatened to turn it into something ugly, unsightly, or, more precisely, something acoustically repellent. In other words, Dante was condemning the privatizing use of space by one class while he sought to privatize the circulation of literary text through the unregulated soundscapes of the city. In both cases, what was at stake was the creation, control, interpretation, and enforcement of public space and the culture of textuality that it supported.[74]

Public streets, squares, and palaces represented the universalizing ideology of the merchant republic, while it was the concrete infrastructure that facilitated economic exchange. They were not the private property of violent upper-class elites, because they were part of a long struggle to organize a merchant city. In fact, arrogant knights such as his widely riding friend disrupted the free movement along public streets that the government was supposed to guarantee (figure 36). "It was the property of the commune that he was usurping" by riding in such a way, Dante tells the executor. "I believe that to usurp that which belongs to the commune is a very serious crime." For Sacchetti's Dante, usurping public space was akin to usurping political power. This was far more annoying than the sad sound of singing blacksmiths. He could hate the blacksmith, but he could not challenge his right to invade public space with the obnoxious sound of his voice. The solution to this problem had to be meted out with cunning and skill, not with legal punishments. He had to educate the smith, however crudely, and *convince* him, through reason or analogy, to change his misguided ways; which brings me to the rock.

The Rock

One could assume that the sonic world of Renaissance Florence was radically different from our own, but the issues that surround the global capacities of sound to transgress the physical barriers that we erect around ourselves persist and can be just as bothersome. They

reveal to us how our acoustic horizons are still annoyingly but gratifyingly linked to the experience of the early modern city.

Giorgio Vasari's anecdote recounts an alleged episode from the biography of the fifteenth-century Florentine painter Sandro Botticelli (figures 50, 51). Since reasoning with the wool weaver failed to resolve the problem, Botticelli resorted to a practical demonstration that taught the weaver a valuable lesson about the relationship between sound, architecture, and urban life. This story, which appears only in the second (1568) edition of the *Lives*, is likely an invention by Vasari. Richard Stapleford points out the striking contrast in Vasari's historical method between the creation of a persona through invented stories and the more rigorous attribution and criticism of the works of art themselves. In the 1550 edition, he ignores two anecdotes about Botticelli's sharp wit and his fear of marriage found in the *Anonimo Magliabechiano*, one of Vasari's sources and much closer to the historical life of the artist.[75] Instead, he re-creates a Botticelli who is wasteful of his time, his talent, and his money by starting the biography with a meditation on negligence of one's present and future well-being, and ending it with Botticelli's ignominious descent into poverty and decrepitude. He also seems to have invented a story describing the kind of jokes the artist liked to play, such as denouncing a friend for heresy, which leads to a stinging rebuke in which his own intellectual devotion to Dante is declared to be fraudulent. Vasari judged his work illustrating Dante's *Inferno* a waste of the artist's time and a detriment to his career.[76]

Botticelli's dissolute character is significantly ameliorated, however, in the 1568 edition. The opening discourse on governing one's life is replaced by a discussion of the artist's early intellectual restlessness, and his shameful death is mitigated by the addition of praise for yet more of his works than in the short epilogue given in 1550. Vasari also introduces two new stories that define his character—the one with the noisy wool weaver, the other about how Botticelli sends an assistant into terrible confusion about what the assistant had actually painted on one of the workshop's famous *tondi*. Both stories help to temper the complete dressing-down he received for his complete ignorance of Dante. But if this is a fictional tale, what kind of historical knowledge can be drawn from it? Its historical value may lie more in what it says about

FIG. 50 Sandro Botticelli, *Adoration of the Magi*, detail showing a self-portrait of the artist. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, N.Y.

FIG. 51 Giorgio Vasari, *Self-Portrait*, 1566–68. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, N.Y.

the relations between space, sound, architecture, and community than in what it may say about Botticelli's life. If we leave aside the problem of disentangling the truth from fabrication about Botticelli's biography, which has long bedeviled art historians of the Italian Renaissance, Vasari's text can become an invaluable source for historical inquiry into the social construction of architecture. In other words, there is a way of reading historical inventions, fabrications, and revisions that forces them to lay bare their culture's preoccupations, anxieties, and modes of interpreting the world. If it sounds like a tall tale, then we may treat it like one. Rather than reading such stories against their grain, why not let them tell us what they want to say?

Botticelli's neighbor mistakenly assumed that the walls of his home represented the absolute boundary between him and the world, where the abstract legal demarcation of space was elided with the sensorial transgression of boundaries. Botticelli's solution is typical of the didactic procedures of the *burle* (cruel practical jokes) that pervade the late medieval and Renaissance novella form, and emphasizes the tight-knit spatial character of dwellings in such an urban agglomeration (see figure 21). It also demonstrates by example how sound, though invisible and immaterial, had a profound physical effect on the integrity of architecture. It had the power to make walls vibrate, to penetrate boundaries that separated individuals and link them, however discordantly, through their sensual experience of the city. The expertise of Botticelli, as an artist working in the professional milieu of fifteenth-century Florence, not to mention the artistic ideals of his sixteenth-century biographer, rested in making visible in painting the complex interplay between social relations, literary narratives, biblical truths, and human desires. In this story he is also depicted as having a very subtle understanding of how those relations may have actually played out in the day-to-day urban context. The precariously perched rock made clear how the noise from the looms penetrated the walls that separated neighbors, reintegrating them into a community whose integrity and well-being could be threatened by ignoring such links and whose spatial demarcations were no less complex and interpenetrating than the artistic compositions of Botticelli's paintings. Walls were never absolute borders, since they always belonged to at least two different spaces at the same time, two different constituencies, or two modes of living that could vibrate in resonance or clash in discord.

Botticelli was able to construct ideal spaces and relationships for the figures in the silent world of his

paintings, but he was also keenly aware of the more chaotic sensorial dimensions that governed daily life—although, since this story is likely a fabrication, it reflects much more the narrative desire of Vasari to construct a world and a character that creates a dialogue with his artistic output. And although the cacophony of urban living conditions destroys the ability of the artist's creativity as a thinker, the story does not question the coexistence of manual and intellectual labor. Translated to the domestic sphere, the noise of industry must give way to spaces of contemplation and an understanding of one's acoustic effects on others. The story also dramatizes the way in which the "civilizing" power of architecture that Pucci dramatized was not only a general force but could be manipulated by its inhabitants to harness its didactic power. This forces us to rethink the way in which we analyze the spatial organization of the historical city. Its design was never fixed in time or space in the experience of its inhabitants. Through the necessity of sensorial perception it emerges as a series of more fluid topographies, brought into being, in this case, by sound.

However, by the sixteenth century, within the more erudite world of the emerging discourse of the fine arts, Vasari was also making a distinction between two types of material production that he seems at pains to maintain: between the artisan and the artist, between the manufacture of cloth and the creation of art. Such a distinction would not have been meaningful to the fourteenth-century artistic practices familiar to Pucci. In Vasari's narrative, the world of the artisan is characterized by the clanking and banging of the industrial machines that denied the artist the quiet solitude of creative reflection. Vasari's explicit desire in his *Lives* to situate the three major branches of art—painting, sculpture, and architecture—within the domain of intellectual production is implicitly reinforced by the humorous anecdotes he intersperses into his narrative with no editorial gloss. The weaving of cloth, once the engine that drove Florence's economy and whose product represented the most refined artistic quality, was now represented as an unwanted sonic obstacle to the artistic imagination.[77] Therefore, the power of sound to disrupt mental labor is marshaled to define the distance between what we now understand as the fine arts, produced by the mind of the artist, and the technical production of luxury goods, produced by the hand of the craftsman, which will enter into the subordinate category of decorative arts.[78]

With Vasari, writing a half-century after Botticelli's death, something of the meaningless, alienating modern concept of noise as a purely negative sign seems to be taking shape. However, its status as noise is contingent upon the particular place in which it was heard, and what the person who heard it was trying to do. Botticelli may have been a painter, but his work required a mental effort that was shattered by invasive sounds. According to the legal scholar Melius de Villiers, noise as a nuisance was not mentioned in Roman law but probably would have been covered by the prohibition on discharging unwanted smells in the airspace over a person's private property to the detrimental effect on someone's comfort and well-being. The only specific law pertaining to noise, however, was concerned with preventing professors and students from distracting each other from their studies. Therefore, Vasari's story implies that the sound of the weaver's looms became "noise" precisely when Botticelli became conscious of his métier as a thinker.[79]

What this story implies about architecture in particular is its role as the pivot around which social relations were played out, where communities were

separated and bound together, defined and reimagined, where bodies gave meaning to the buildings—literally making them vibrate—through which they defined themselves. Architecture was at the heart of the construction of such social relations, so that interpreting its changing meanings is simultaneously an interpretation of the society whose actions were constantly manipulating its surfaces and transgressing its boundaries. In the example in question, it was the incapacity of architecture to parallel an imagined social transformation that called for the discrete division of art from industry, whose excessive industrial noise was now on display. Botticelli's rock made the destructive potential of certain sounds visible and stands as a reminder to the architectural historian that our carefully constructed analyses of design and urban space are destabilized and could actually be demolished by ignoring their larger sensorial dimensions. In fact, it was the weakness of the wall that allowed Botticelli's rock to make *visible* the destructive potential of certain sounds and the positive relationship between silence and mental labor.

This episode also demonstrates how the sources we make use of, such as Vasari's *Vite*, for the interpretation of some of the most sophisticated cultural production of the Italian Renaissance can also give us insight into the street life and street culture of the city, where artist and laborer constantly found themselves in close physical and metaphorical proximity.

The Bell

This brings us to the silencing of the Piagnona and Savonarola in 1498. His supporters, known as *piagnoni*, variously translated as "wailers" or "weepers," testify to the centrality of the auditory dimensions of his reform movement's relationship to the city. Savonarola was an aural failure when he first arrived from Ferrara, with his "weak voice, ungainly gestures, and poor delivery," not to mention his strange *romagnolo* dialect, which, Dante declared in his treatise on the vernacular, made men sound like women. He was not accustomed to the seasoned and skeptical listeners of a city like Florence, "where the populace looked for a performance and citizens were ready to compare preachers, to criticize, or go to another church" in search of a better spectacle (figure 52).[80] And except, perhaps, for a certain unnamed blacksmith, they were probably acute critics of the rhetorical power of storytelling in the piazza. But Savonarola obviously listened to and learned from the sounds of Florence, given that he was ultimately able to gain the loyalty of large crowds of people. His ever-present voice and the frequent peals of the Piagnona became a regular feature of the Florentine soundscape as he attempted to purge the collective soul of the city. It rang to celebrate the bonfires of the vanities, when Florentines offered their "obscene idols, lascivious images, and luxury goods" to the fire under the spell of Savonarola's zeal.[81] However, by the time of his fall from grace in 1498, one supporter noted that Savonarola's opponents did not even allow the *piagnoni* to speak in the chaos before his execution. The friars were forbidden by government proclamation even to utter Savonarola's name, to participate in processions, to pray in common, or to sing their favorite hymns; all ways in which they had acoustically marked their presence in the city and through which they made a claim for its urban sanctity. In contrast, the silenced friars had to endure the noise of obscene and insulting songs that their enemies hurled at them throughout Florence.[82] Their bell, perhaps, was the only voice that remained capable of expressing their solidarity. Unlike the sound that Dante excavated from the past to criticize the

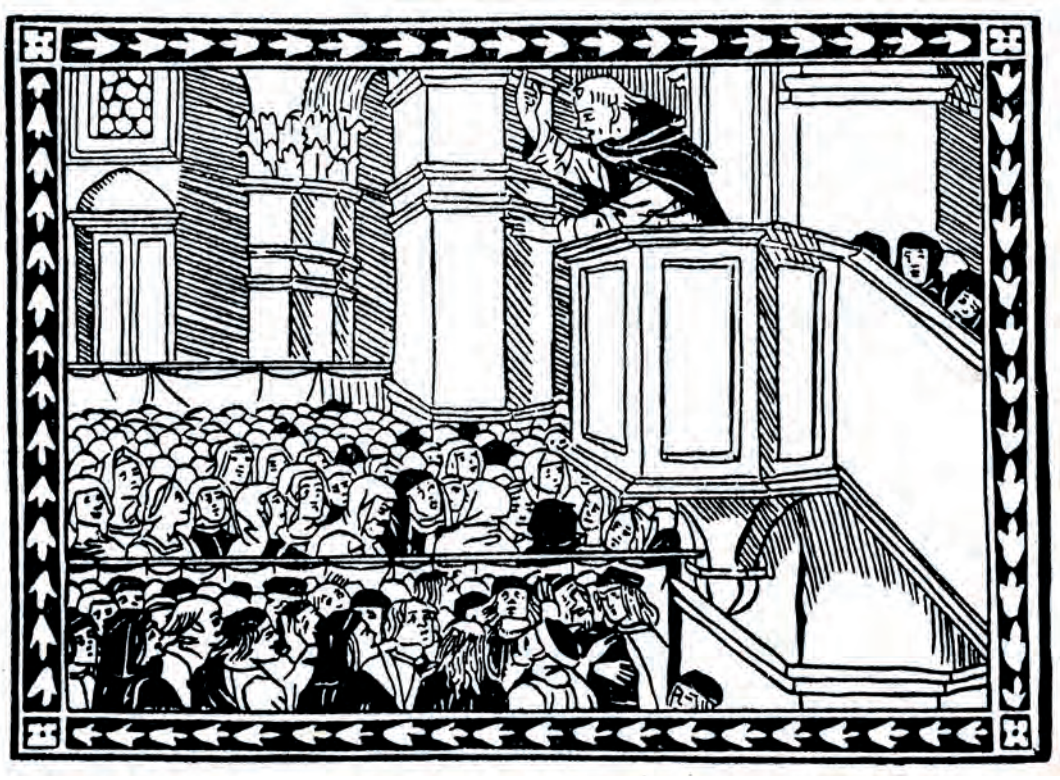


FIG. 52 Savonarola preaching in the Florentine cathedral. Illustration from the *Compendio di revelatione*, 1496, by Girolamo Savonarola. Photo: HIP / Art Resource, N.Y.

factional discord of his times, the sound of the Piagnona failed to unite a city divided between wailers and their enemies, the *arrabbiati* (enraged mad dogs) and the *compagnacci* (rude, ugly companions).[83] Its parade of shame through the city, the ritual whipping, and the subsequent exile of the bell symbolically marked the silencing of a political and a spiritual movement whose legitimacy and power rested on the frequent sound of the Piagnona. However, the exorcising rituals of humiliation brought to bear on the bell only served to augment its aural power. After ringing a single strike of revenge on the death of the executive prior who orchestrated its exile to the observant Franciscan monastery of San Salvatore (figure 53), it was returned to the Dominicans in 1509 by Pope Julius II with the permission of a much more sympathetic government. By 1529, the Piagnona transcended its partisan past and redeemed itself when it rang to sound the call to liberty, rallying the whole city during the brutal siege by imperial troops fighting for the return of the exiled Medici family (figure 54).[84]

When the last Florentine republic fell in 1530 and gave way to the establishment of the principate, the sound of bells of the Palazzo Vecchio suddenly became incongruent with the sonic order of the new state. After this disastrous defeat and the return of the Medici, the newly "elected" duke, Alessandro de' Medici, wasted no time in dismantling the soundscape that Florentines had worked so hard to build. One of his first official acts was the removal the great

FIG. 53 The Observant Franciscan church of San Salvatore al Monte, which sits on the hill to the southeast of the city in very close proximity to the Benedictine monastery of San Miniato, Florence. Note its diminutive bell cote in relation to the size of the church. The Benedictines legally challenged the size and range of the Franciscans' bell and tower when they moved into the area in the fifteenth century. To this day the church does not have an independent campanile to rival that of its Benedictine neighbors, whose tower was large enough for Michelangelo to install armaments during the siege of 1529–30. Photo by author.

bell of the commune, the Leone, from the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio, an act that both symbolically and collectively punished the city. On October 1, 1532, the Leone was taken down and ritually broken in the piazza before him.[85] This was the bell that had answered the Badia every morning with six soft strikes. It was also the bell that had called Florentines together, in crisis and celebration, for over two centuries. It was this sound that had called the people to arms—likely on more than one occasion—to chase the Medici from the city as enemies of liberty.[86] In the words of one contemporary observer, the bell of the councils was taken away so that Florentines could no longer hear the "sweet sound of liberty."[87] Its sound was now rendered unnecessary and subversive. Taking away an enemy's bell, therefore, was a way of rendering certain groups incapable of expressing their religious or political identity.[88]

Duke Alessandro most likely knew that as long as the bell was heard, it would remind Florentines of that liberty, and its destruction was an attempt to enforce a collective forgetting. He may have had some success, since the echo of this bell lived on within the vagaries of a silent, unreliable, and depoliticized memory. The sixteenth-century historian Benedetto Varchi wrote that Florentines debated whether the prime motivation to destroy the bell was symbolic or

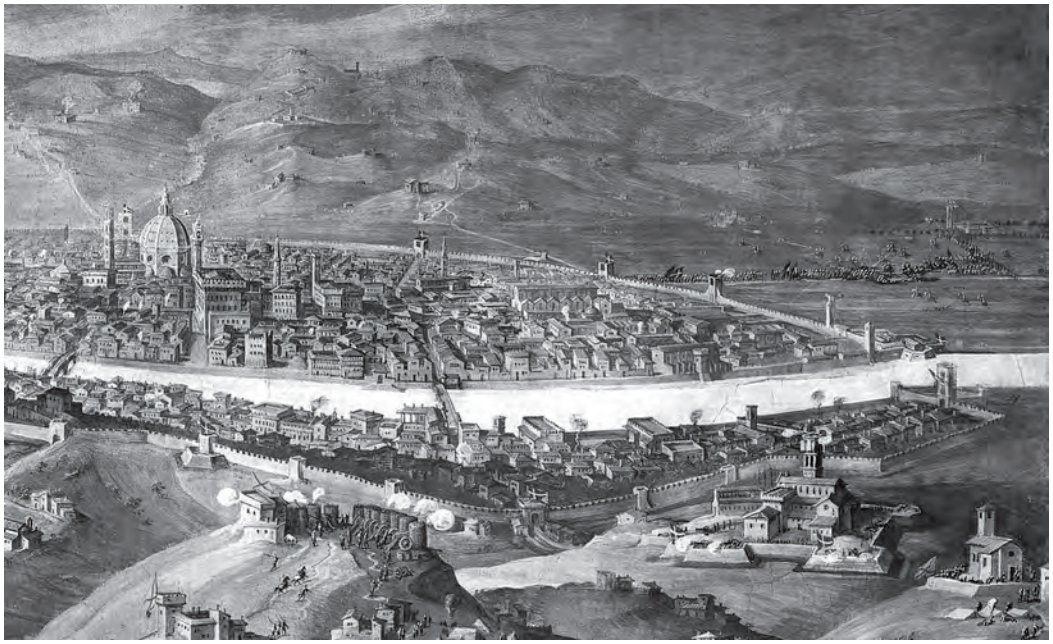


FIG. 54 Giorgio Vasari, *The Siege of Florence* (detail), c. 1555, Palazzo Vecchio, Sala di Clemente VII. Note the fortified monastery of San Miniato (*lower right*) with the church of San Salvatore extending obliquely to its left. In the background, Florence's four main bell towers are distinctly visible flanking Brunelleschi's dome. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, N.Y.

FIG. 55 Benvenuto Cellini, forty-*soldi* coin with profile of Alessandro dei Medici (recto). Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello. Photo: Scala / Ministero per i beni e l'attività culturali / Art Resource, N.Y.

practical, whether Alessandro wanted to silence the memory of republican liberty embedded in its ring, or whether he needed to melt it down to mint coins to pay for the German troops that the emperor had supplied to protect him from that Florentine liberty (figure 55).

Later, the bell would enter into the official collective memory of the city as a means to smooth over the violent transition from republic to duchy. In his history of Florence, Scipione Ammirato recalls a conversation he had with Duke Cosimo I de' Medici, Alessandro's successor. He recounts the story of how a Sienese master made it possible, in 1322, for only two men, instead of twelve, to ring the *grande campana del popolo*, inspiring Cosimo to recall that the bell weighed twenty-seven thousand pounds and could be heard for miles around (figure 56).[89] There is no mention of how his predecessor broke the bell as he broke the republic, melting it down either for

FIG. 56 View of the bell tower of the Palazzo Vecchio from the Oltrarno. Photo by author.

the silver it contained or to stop its call for the council of the *popolo*.[90] Relegated to an official, nonpartisan memory of the city's past greatness, the sound of the Leone was now a "living" memory divorced from its ritual destruction, which symbolically excised the analogous memory of the breaking of the Florentine republic from the hope its sound always carried for the creation of a unified and just community.

The increasingly complex system of sonic markers that populated Renaissance Florence was part of a continual struggle of contentious communities and institutions to express and link themselves to the jurisdictions over which they laid claim. Florentines had to be adept at hearing the changing socio-political relations that such sounds represented. All of these stories represent ways in which producing, suppressing, and interpreting the sounds the city made were basic elements of how Florentines carved out spaces within which they imprinted their identities onto the *urbs* and the *civitas*. At the micro-level of day-to-day life, Sacchetti could dramatize how Dante learned about the interlaced social and political relations he shared with those above and below him, relations so tangled up with each other that historians have

trouble constructing solid boundaries between them. As Botticelli's painfully thin wall reminds us, architectural barriers were as porous as the social boundaries they were erected to maintain and reinforce. Florentines knew this much better than we often do, and were constantly listening to the noises their city made, using them as signposts for navigating, willingly or not, through the multiple, fluid, overlapping, and conflicted topographies with which their city confronted them.

These stories were also immersed within the sonic landscape of a city that was producing some of the most important cultural, intellectual, and scientific monuments of the early modern world. Read against each other, they reveal important historical knowledge about the way in which the urban environment was a lively field of meaningful signs that provided those who listened carefully with the dense raw material for the aural construction and suppression of the identities and relationships that were such important drivers of its dynamic urban culture. But the question remains: How was this soundscape constructed? What were its basic parts, and who determined the nature of its rhythms? And finally, what can we learn by reconstructing the sonic armatures through which Florentines communicated to themselves and the world beyond? Answers to these questions will be pursued in the next two chapters.

Florentine Soundscapes

2.

At the heart of the urban soundscape, reverberating across the cityscapes of pre-modern Christendom, were the dense, interconnected, and repetitive patterns of bells ringing from their towers, organizing social life, regulating economies, and binding communities to the buildings and spaces they inhabited. The general pattern of bell ringing for marking time was similar throughout Italy and Europe, but each city had its own particular internal rhythms that defined its singularity, much as its local architectural permutations were linked to larger regional and national styles.[1] These rhythms were familiar to past generations, but despite the very conservative nature of bell rhythms, they are barely comprehensible to us now. When bells ring now, they often function as secondary markers of urban time registered more easily through other media devices. Their sound continually reiterates and draws attention to the anachronism of the buildings they peal for, and thus they gesture vaguely to a distant world on the horizon of the past. The sound of a bell is still often connected to the religious community it serves, but the role of bells in constructing, marking, and preserving larger communal identities has been much diminished. Ironically, the sound of bells today, especially to outsiders, can signify the very loss of collective memory that bells had for so long maintained: a densely meaningful but unintelligible sound, a pure sign of the past, the memorial tolling for their own demise as structural elements of the urban landscape.

In the past, bells enveloped the day within a sonic exchange that regulated sleep and work, called people to prayer, to meals, to celebrations, councils,

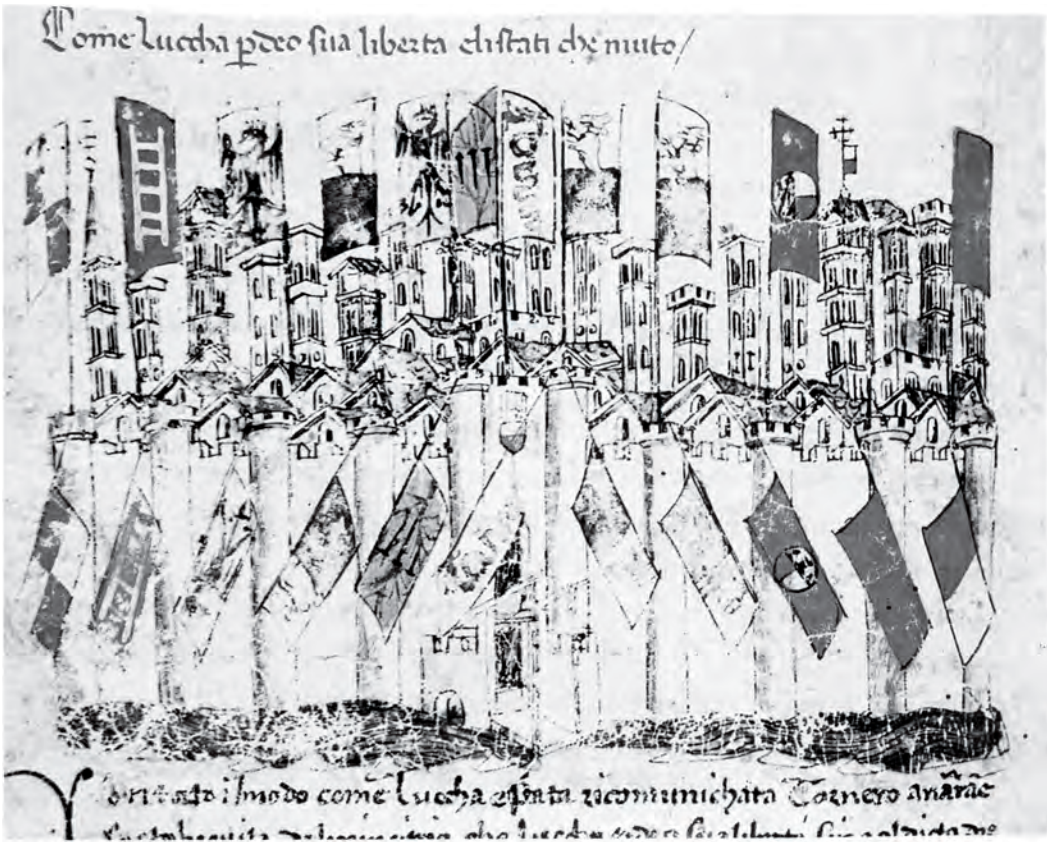


FIG. 57 The vertical profile of the city of Lucca around 1400, showing the density of towers that characterized the image of many central Italian cities, including Florence. Illustration from the *Chroniche* of Giovanni Sercambi (chronicle of the city of Lucca), c. 1400. A.S.L., Biblioteca Manoscritti, no. 107, fol. 44v. Archivio di Stato, Lucca.

executions, and bed. The sound of the bells was, above all, a unifying element that gathered up a community into their acoustic regime, choreographing the theaters of everyday life. It expanded, rather than restricted, both time and space. In Florence, civic sounds were augmented by the seasonal crescendos and diminuendos of the city's local religious feast days, which linked local communities to a larger Christian cosmos at the same time that it led them, literally and metaphorically, to the places of spiritual salvation.

When Florentines heard a bell in the past, they were perfectly aware of what it meant by the way it was struck, by how many times it sounded, and in what particular sequence it rang.[2] Florentines were deeply engaged with the noises their city made. They were enmeshed in urban sounds; listening to them, interpreting them, creating them, manipulating them, moving toward them, or fleeing from them. Bells were the principal element of a cluster of urban sounds, operating in dialogue, creating a sonic environment that was never neutral or uncontested but was often a raucous symphony with multiple composers and many more performers, legitimate and not, all of whom expressed a deeply felt will to organize space.

The construction of a coordinated sonic regime in Florence, from the earliest attempts to establish republican institutions, is the subject of this chapter. Driving this study is the claim that the soundscape

was a principal medium through which authorities played out major strategies of urban planning and political propaganda. Consequently, the following discussion traces the venerable elements of the sacred soundscape that preceded the establishment of the popular governments of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It goes on to map out the interlaced rhythms of sacred and secular sounds that then characterized the soundscape of Florence as it carried out some of the most dynamic political experiments of early modern Europe. This discussion hinges on the relationship between sound, space, and architecture, specifically through the ringing of bells, the topography of bell towers, and the aural territories they brought into being. After tracing the history of bells and the construction of the city's principal bell towers, this chapter then maps out the temporal arc of daily bell ringing in Florence in order to uncover the spatio-temporal armature upon which the complicated symbolic dimensions of sound played out across the city.

Church bells and the towers that emerged to house them created a distinct urban vertical profile that was characteristic of Italian communes, such as the early fifteenth-century image of Lucca found in Giovanni Sercambi's chronicle of the city (figure 57).[3] They generated and marked the multiple temporal loops within which people lived—daily work and prayer, annual feasts and holidays, and seasonal agrarian labor. They assembled the faithful, united them in space, and brought messages of death, salvation, absolution, and celebration. They created a sonic zone of refuge around those that heard it, chasing away demons and mitigating the destruction of storms.

Bells also became a central feature of the medieval commune's claim of legitimacy and authority and its role as guarantor of justice. Secular governments mourned, celebrated, threatened, and punished their citizens by appropriating the sound of the only "holy object" (*res sacra*) that had been sanctioned for profane use.[4] In Florence, bells were a critical component of the reorganization of the city by the successive popular governments that fitfully brought the city under their control from the late thirteenth through the fifteenth centuries. It was against the closed, mute fortified defensive towers that defined the territories of the city's warring clans and had dominated the city's skyline that Florentine republican regimes created a speaking architecture that harnessed the power of bells to assemble, unite, and represent the communities they brought into being (figures 58, 59). Along with trumpets, songs, and voices, they transformed the city's political landscape into an ideal, ordered, acoustic topography of meaningful sounds. As a result, this acoustic regime had to be meticulously regulated by statutes, conventions, ancient privileges, and legal sanctions.

A Florentine History of Bells

From morning to evening, the day was punctuated by the sounds of both civic and sacred bells (figure 60). These bells enveloped the day within a sonic exchange that regulated almost every aspect of daily life. Added to this were the crescendos and diminuendos of the seasonal ringing of a city's local religious feast days. The sound of the bells was, above all, a unifying element that bridged the gap between society and space.

With a long history shrouded in mystery, bells carried with them special supernatural powers that reinforced their capacity to maintain communities in very real ways. Giovanni Villani's widely read fourteenth-century chronicle of the city includes a discussion of the mythical origins of bells, demonstrating

FIG. 58 View of the Palace of the Podestà (Bargello) from the cupola of the cathedral, showing its simple open belfry. Photo by author.

FIG. 59 View of the bell tower of the Palace of the Priors (Palazzo Vecchio) from via Calimala looking down via Vaccherecia. Note how the street frames the tower, which Trachtenberg argues helps to explain the tower's off-center position on its base. Photo by author.

FIG. 60 View of the four principal towers, the central acoustic transmitters of the Florentine soundscape, from the Fortezza del Belvedere. (*left to right*) Cathedral, Priors (Palazzo Vecchio), Badia, Podestà (Bargello). Photo by author.

how central they were to Florentines. Villani recounts the heroic campaign of Eraco, the recently converted Lombard king of Puglia, to win back the True Cross from the king of Persia around 750 C.E. The occasion was commemorated by the metal sculpture of the king that still stood in the city of Barletta. It was just around this time that another metal object was cast by a master in the city of Nola, not far from Naples. The first Christian bell (*campana*) ever heard, it was brought to Rome and hung in the portico of the Lateran,[5] where the pope ordered it to sound, for the honor of god, the hours of the night and of the day.[6] Nothing in the narrative of the chronicle explains why this brief account of the origin of bells appears at this point, where it interrupts an account of the southern Lombard kings and their battles against the Roman church. The structure of the chronicle, where events are given in strict chronological order, can explain this: the invention of the bell was important enough to insert when it occurred. However, would a fourteenth-century reader not also see the connection between the attacks and destruction of Rome and the bells that would eventually come to signal the sonic protection of the church and its faithful?

Villani was recounting a version of a much more widely known legend that originated with the Benedictine monk Walafrid Strabo (c. 808–849). Strabo may have been using the term *campana* as an adjectival form of "Campania," to link the bell (*nola*) to its town of origin. *Campana* then seems to have superseded *nola* as the Italian word for bell.[7] This original bell was small and coarsely made, but over time bell casters learned how to produce higher-quality ones, which notably, in Villani's version of the myth, despite being placed in a church, did not call the faithful but marked the ceaseless flow of time.[8] Therefore, Villani emphasizes the timekeeping rather than the gathering function of bells. In doing so, he deftly makes the transition from the historical origins of the bell to his own urban soundscape. Marking time may have been what most interested him as a merchant, since

FIG. 61 The city and the tower to which it always belonged visually and aurally. View from the Bargello. Photo by author.

markets and labor were governed by the ringing of specific bells and coordinated around the liturgical hours of the church when certain prayers were sung.[9]

Regulating the daily spiritual exercises and practical duties of monastic life was most likely the earliest function of the Christian bell.[10] A popular legend attributed the "public signaling of the Hours or time of day to Pope Sabinianus (604–606)," before any mention of calling Christians to gather together.[11] However, the bell quickly took on several other major functions as it migrated to places throughout the sacred topography of the church. From marking time and regulating work, it also began to bring the faithful together. It gave voice to collective joy and sorrow by mourning the dead and celebrating feasts,[12] and it served as a mnemonic device, anticipating holy days for the faithful and reminding them when to pray.[13]

Marking time, assembling, expressing collective emotion, and preserving memory were the primary functions of the bell-and-tower configuration within the realm of the sacred, an architectural configuration whose earliest secure documentation dates back to the eighth century.[14] However, the secular rhythms of the communal bell tower emerged in the twelfth century in Italy, and by the fourteenth it was among the most important attributes a city possessed, making Florence an early protagonist of legally creating a communal identity distinct from but connected to the sacred soundscape.[15] The communal bell would combine the various voices and functions of state to express a united civic community and attempt to mitigate Florence's internal political struggles. The communal bell tower would then stand as a sign, both visual and aural, of the city itself (figure 61).

FIG. 62 Close-ups of the four "speaking" towers of Florence, showing the range of their stone construction. (*left to right*) Cathedral, Priors, Badia, Podestà. Photos by author.

As the architectural foundations of the civic soundscape, bell towers have not been considered as a coordinated acoustic spatial system that was used to define space and regulate urban life. The regular, repetitive acoustic signals that these towers emitted transformed the ephemeral nature of sound into a persistent urban presence. These sounds inhabited spaces, creating distinct zones, defining their contours, and marking their identities. The concrete means by which the rhetoric of stones was broadcast within the city lay in the configuration of certain towers. Florence's subtle but careful choreography of both sacred and civic sounds conflated the sacred and secular within overlapping geographies. The nexus of this acoustic regime lay in the exchange between its four principal sacred and secular institutional protagonists. Their towers—two civic and two religious—dominated the sonic rhythms of the daily life in Florence, and although they were governed by separate authorities, their use, meaning, and messages were closely intertwined. The two civic towers were that of the Palace of the Priors (Palazzo Vecchio)—the city's town hall from its completion in the early fourteenth century—and the tower of the Palace of the Podestà (Bargello), historically the seat of the city's civil and criminal courts. The ecclesiastical towers were the campanile of the cathedral and the hexagonal tower of the Badia, Florence's ancient Benedictine monastery (figure 62).

This acoustic armature formed the basis for an acoustic exchange that governed the spiritual and secular realms of Florentines. If the sacred and secular sonic rhythms of the city formed an integrated reciprocal partnership, then a similar integration occurred at the level of social practice. As the music historian Blake Wilson has made clear, it was the singing of religious devotions that bridged the gap between public liturgy and private acts of contemplation,[16] just as the sound of the evening bell bridged the gap between public order and individual prayer. It was this capacity to link disparate spaces and actions that made sound a crucial component of the built

FIG. 63 The campanile and its cathedral seen from the gallery of the Palazzo Vecchio. Photo by author.

environment. It enveloped the most important and the most quotidian spaces with meaning. It bound the humble workaday noises of the neighborhood to the eternal rhythms of the cosmos. If the church's bells rang within a synchronic exchange with the bells of the commune each day, then its own internal sonic dimensions were founded on a hierarchy of exchanges, of privileges and deference.

Sacred Sounds

When Florence's communal bells emerged onto the soundscape, they were confronted with a whole complex series of sacred sounds that had long been regulating Florentine religious life. These sounds punctuated the air with a weekly cadence of religious feasts, which was, in turn, subsumed within an annual cycle of feast days celebrated in Florence. Each feast had its own unique rhythm isolating and framing it as an acoustic ensemble. These sounds were organized around the city's cathedral (*duomo*), its bells, masses, and processional calendar, which created a coordinated, hierarchical interaction with the churches under its jurisdiction. However, ringing bells was also a way for certain religious institutions to express their independence, as well as their direct connection to specific communities.

The construction history of the cathedral campanile and the symbolic rhetoric of its decorative program have both been the subject of extensive investigation (figure 63), due primarily to the involvement of some of the most important artists and designers of the time.[17] Accordingly, this scholarly scrutiny has

FIG. 64 The old tower of Santa Reparata (*left*) and Giotto's new tower (*center*) are both depicted framing the Florentine cathedral in a scene from the earliest illustrated copy of Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Bibliothèque nationale de France, ital. 482, fol. 79v. Photo enhanced by author.

tended to isolate it from its surroundings, unmoor it from its foundations, and set it adrift within the canon of Florentine architectural history. It was certainly true that Florentines were justifiably proud of the magnificence of this tower over all others, but the sounds it made would always have reminded them of the urban network of aural architecture to which it belonged and to which it spoke on a daily basis. They would also have remembered that its voice was a continuation of that which belonged to an older tower, which it replaced between 1334 and the 1359. This earlier tower, on the opposite side and to the rear of the older cathedral of Santa Reparata, was finally torn down on September 19, 1357, after damage from a fire; both towers are pictured in a fourteenth-century drawing from an early copy of the *Decameron* (figure 64).[18] The laying of the foundation stone of the new tower on July 18, 1334, was the scene of a solemn ceremony, recorded by Villani, headed by the bishop and attended by all the clergy, the priors, and many people in a grand procession.[19] Unlike the towers erected by the civic government, the cathedral tower was not built on the ruins of a destroyed or humbled family. It was not fortified in a climate of internal

FIG. 65 Old Testament prophets on the south façade of the cathedral bell tower. Photo by author.

political conflict, and its bells did not play a formal part in the factionalism that underlay political legitimation. It spoke a more universal language of collective veneration of the city's favorite saints (figure 65).

Yet even early descriptions of the tower tended to silence the sounds it made while emphasizing its visual grandeur and its status not as a civic monument but as a work of art. This had much to do with its connection to the dominating presence of one of the artistic superstars of the fourteenth century, Giotto di Bondone, behind whom the tower inevitably recedes. Tied to such a singular personality, who was contracted for the original design, the tower occupies a more ambivalent place within the collaborative nature of city-building that had characterized the understanding of Florentine monumental architecture. If the tower was the product of such a prominent personality, could it also be appropriated by Florentine urban identity? For fourteenth-century commentators, it was a mixed bag of options, and since the tower was associated with Giotto, it gave rise to a critical response appropriate to aspects of its individual design features that tended to suppress interpretation based on a larger urban architectural configuration. It was inevitable that it would enter into art-historical discourse as an isolated monument and be studied for its own internal cohesion.

Villani, however, contrasts the social dimension with the individual. He foregrounds the civic ritual that surrounded the laying of the bell tower's foundation stone into the excavations, which descended as far as the water table. He praises Giotto's consummate expertise as a painter and how this skill (*virtù*) and excellence (*bontà*) were recognized and rewarded by

FIG. 66 Communal arms on the northeast corner of the cathedral bell tower (campanile). Photo by author.

the commune in his salary as superintendent (*provedditore*) of the cathedral works (*opera del duomo*). Later in the century, the chronicler Coppi di Marchionne Stefani would paraphrase Villani, mentioning the solemn procession and stating that the bishop laid the first stone. He does not, however, make any mention of Giotto.[20]

In Pucci's versification of Villani's chronicle, the *Centiloquio*, the interrogation of the work and the artist really begins. Pucci is much less interested in the momentous founding than in narrating how Giotto's inspired initial design was subsequently mishandled by Andrea Pisano—who was removed from his job—and then left unfinished by Francesco Talenti when the works committee (*opera*) turned its attention to the completion of the cathedral building itself.[21] Pucci is somewhat troubled by the design—a subject on which Villani is completely silent—since it began so well but faltered with Giotto's successors. Even as late as the turn of the fifteenth century, an anonymous diarist openly criticized what was a very expensive construction project. According to the author, Giotto, not his successors, committed two errors: the design did not have a proper projecting base (*ceppo da piè*), and it was too narrow. Such wrongs weighed so heavily on his heart, so the story went, that he became ill, and thus this project hastened the death of the beloved painter-turned-architect.[22]

It was not until the early fifteenth century that commentators dispensed with adjudicating Giotto and his followers as well as the troubling building history in order to transform the tower into a coherent symbol of Florence's dazzling beauty. Goro Dati ignores Giotto and the problem of authorship and successful design. Instead, he describes the campanile's rich marble incrustation and its numerous figures, and then contrasts its circumference to its height: 100:120 *braccia* (58:70 m). In Goro's text, this richness, along with the tower's soaring dimensions, combines to overwhelm the capacity of the imagination to apprehend its beauty.[23] Consequently, he transforms the experience of the tower from a reflection on costly design flaws into an encounter with the sublime.[24]

In Benedetto Dei's chronicle, the tower's polychromed marble exterior is linked to the three regions from which the stone was quarried. Its measurements—height, circumference, and the dimensions of the inner meeting room—are characteristically subsumed into an exhaustive list of measurements that connect numerous features of the entire cathedral complex, transforming it into a multidimensional series of axes in space. In a series of harmonic numerical relations, therefore, the bell tower reaches out to the structures around it.[25] In Leonardo Bruni's official history of Florence, on the other hand, written several decades earlier than Dei's description, the tower is now the sole and lucid artistic expression of the distinguished painter Giotto. All the confusion and doubt about design, authorship, and completeness

FIG. 67 Andrea Pisano, relief cycle of the origins of the human arts that followed the Genesis stories, lower register of the south façade of the campanile, c. 1340s. (*left to right*) Gionitus (astronomy), Armatura (construction), medicine, animal husbandry, weaving, Phoroneus (law), Daedalus (master and patron of the arts). Photo by author.

have been brushed aside, leaving the tower as the one he alone designed and a work of extraordinary magnificence.[26]

Effectively, this development shows how issues about design and authorship were crystallized into an unproblematic one-to-one relationship between a name and a work of art, making the tower seamlessly part of a growing cult of great Florentines (*uomini illustri*) that was beginning to define the Renaissance city's artistic preeminence. For Bruni, the building of the tower functioned as a brief but significant interlude between accounts of Florentine military movements around Parma. It recalls Villani's own interjection of the story about the invention of the Christian bell into a narrative about military actions against the Roman church.

Finally, Giotto's epitaph, composed by the humanist scholar Angelo Poliziano for a public monument erected in the cathedral for the artist in 1490, makes reference specifically to the heroic individualism of the Florentine artist not in painting but in his capacity as architect of the campanile.[27] This is the only description that even makes an oblique reference to the fact that the tower was built to make sounds. Rather than a mechanism for spreading the Christian message, it expressed the tower's transcendent beauty and Giotto's artistic *ingegno*: "You will admire the famous tower sounding in the sacred air. It also grew from my model to the stars."[28]

The cathedral's tower was the only one in the city to have a systematic decorative program, one of the most extensive of the Italian trecento.[29] Its placement so close to the baptistery, along with the numerous reliefs and images of the city's lily (*giglio*) on its lower registers, reveals the tight integration of religious and civic authorities (figure 66).[30] The sculptural program celebrates the Creation myth, human creativity, labor, intellectual pursuits, the cosmos, and the virtues. Within this complex symbolism there is a definite iconographic link between Florentine civic *virtù* and the city's productive manufacture. It sets weaving and wall construction next to medicine and astronomy, aggrandizing the manual labor that produced much of the city's wealth (figure 67).

FIG. 68 Andrea Pisano, the mechanical art of weaving with the goddess Minerva, from the lower register of the south façade of the campanile, c. 1340s. Photo by author.

FIG. 69 Andrea Pisano, *Armatura*, relief depicting the art of wall construction with the figure of God as the *capomaestro*, or master mason, from the lower register of the south façade of the campanile, c. 1340s. Photo by author.

For example, in the weaving relief a woman sits at a loom next to the Roman goddess Minerva. In the scene depicting the building of a wall, God himself plays the role of *capomaestro*, overseeing the construction work. In the first scene, female labor sits under the auspices of Wisdom, while in the second, the designer's creativity is linked to God as the architect of the cosmos (figures 68, 69).[31] As part of the complicated, labor-intensive, and messy production of woolen cloth, weaving formed part of the city's most important industry. Although it was sustained by the exploitation of the city's laboring classes, the iconography of the image makes a claim for female labor's virtue by placing it under the patronage of Minerva. Such an image is as remarkable for its promotion of such labor as it is in its suppression of the conditions under which that labor was performed. Representations of urban industrial labor rarely graced the sculptural programs of religious structures in the way that seasonal tasks of agrarian peasant labor served as allegories of the months in medieval church portals.[32] It seems to have offered the city's manufacturing elite a way of ennobling their business pursuits by appropriating and transforming such pastoral images, decontextualizing them from the city, and setting them side-by-side with other intellectual pursuits, such as medicine and astronomy. The female weaver is linked to her male counterparts by the solitariness of her work, separating it from the concentrated zones of mass labor located throughout the city that such an

FIG. 70 The three major wall circuits of medieval Florence, showing the expanded territory of the cathedral's bells after 1333. Drawing by author.

image ostensibly represented. But even if the image was sublimated by this representational strategy, there still remained a realistic image of a woman at a loom.

The image of wall construction was connected to divine creativity and makes a direct reference to the city's dynamic expansion. The massive final expansion of the city's defensive walls had just been completed in 1333, not long before the bell tower's construction was begun. It would have been impossible for a Florentine audience not to see the connection. Villani had celebrated the city's grand new scale in his chronicle, giving his readers a virtual tour of the circumference of the city's new walls. They were a concrete monument to the city's expanding wealth as well as the ultimate enclosure of a sacred community within defined borders. The bells of the campanile, which had to reach out to the limits of these new walls, were a crucial part of the maintenance of that sanctification (figures 70–72). These sounds audibly connected the defensive walls at the periphery to the center of the

FIG. 71 View of the remaining section of the fourteenth-century walls in the Oltrarno, ascending from Porta San Miniato to the Porta San Giorgio. Photo by author.

city. They brought, order, peace, and protection by regulating the opening and closing of gates, marking the threshold of divine protection by fusing bells to walls, sound to stone.

This helps to explain why the circumference of the campanile was so important to its identity as an architectural structure, a fact mentioned explicitly by both Dati and Dei.[33] The circumference was one of the most important measurements of the new circuit of walls for Villani, who measured them at a total of 7,700 *braccia* (4,489 m) in circumference (figure 73).[34] Quantifying structures and topographies was an important activity of the Florentine merchant, whose cosmos was made meaningful by numerical relationships. Benedetto Dei's chronicle is filled with the counting and measuring of streets, friends, enemies, and places, which he organizes into a series of themed lists. Measurements create comparable things. The campanile, like the walls, therefore, was not conceived only in the vertical register, but also in the horizontal plane as a symbolic enclosure of space, mimicking, in an ideal, abstract way, the enclosing walls that surrounded this central acoustic node, whose presence would have radiated out in expanding sonic waves.

After the destruction of the old campanile of Santa Reparata, the bells were moved to their new home several months afterward.[35] One of the last ceremonial events they may have witnessed (July 12, 1357) before being moved was the placement of the first column of the body of the church itself after the interlude of the bell tower construction, which was accompanied by the sound of organs, trumpets, and the voices of the singing clergy.[36] In the new construction, precautions had been taken to neutralize

FIG. 72 Porta San Niccolò, one of the city's main gates located at the eastern edge of the Oltrarno, restored to its original height. Photo by author.

FIG. 73 A visualization of Villani's route around the fourteenth-century walls, listing his measurements of distances between and heights of towers and gates. This detail of the Bonsignori map represents the beginning and end of that journey, which departed from the north side of the Arno at the Torre Reale, moved counterclockwise around the city and ended at the Porta San Niccolò, which was 440 *braccia* (approximately 237 meters) away from the starting point across the river. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

what would have been the strong lateral thrust of the swinging bells by making sure that the masonry for the upper section of the tower was precisely cut, in large blocks, and reinforced with metal clamps and iron chains.[37] Precedent for the polychromed surface of the cathedral tower can be seen in the Badia's campanile, which dated all the way back to the founding of the monastery in the tenth century. Although it underwent several building campaigns from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, evidence for this decoration can be seen in the Bigallo fresco of the Misericordia, traces of which were also found during the latest restoration (figure 42).[38]

It is difficult to determine the number and names of the bells housed by the campanile of the cathedral at any given time. The medieval ordinal, preserved in the archives of the Opera del Duomo, *Mores et consuetudinis canonice florentine*, names at least four bells—two are referred to as "Squilla," another as the "Clero," and the largest as the "Cagnazza."[39] The two named Squilla would have been smaller bells, while the Clero would likely have been larger, corresponding to the *mezzana*, or midsized bell, often mentioned in bell towers containing multiple bells and charged with the task of ringing specific sequences. It was used to call all the clergy from all the churches in the city for festival functions.[40] The Cagnazza, literally meaning pugnosed or deformed in a canine way, was so named, presumably, for its less than sonorous sound.

In 1300, we learn, a certain Ferrantino de' Ferrantini had a bell cast for the cathedral in honor of Saint Zenobius, one of the city's earliest native saints, martyr, and first bishop.[41] The story comes from a contemporary chronicle, where the narrative account of the factional violence is interrupted by the casting and placement of a bell, known subsequently as the Ferratina.[42] This was, therefore, seen as an extremely important act at such an explosive time, where the diarist sought sources and symbols of Florentine unity at a time of severe political uncertainty. In a similar manner, the gift of a bell for the cathedral, a building that no faction could claim as its own, might have linked bell casting to gestures of political reconciliation and a unified notion of Florentine identity.

Sacred bells, in particular, had their own magical power rooted in the sound they made. They were considered in scholastic thought to be the Christian answer to the silver trumpets of the priests of Moses, which assembled the tribes to sacrifice. At Jericho, under the prophet Joshua, they were the trumpets that had the power to knock down city walls, embodying the power that the church now claimed as its own truth of the New Testament (figure 74).[43] Religious bells were also rung to stave off the phantoms driving storms and lightning. In order to unleash this power, bishops in the Middle Ages would perform a ritual exorcism, washing the bell with holy water, drying it, singing psalms and reciting prayers over it, covering it with unctions and oil, invoking the power of the silver trumpets for it, dedicating a saint to protect it, while lighting incense and putting myrrh under it.[44] All of these elements—names, dedications, prayers, songs, smells, ritual purification, and historical invocation—led to the protection of the community from harm. Such ritual practices reveal why urban communities were so intimately connected to the bells that rang for them, which enveloped them in a sacred and protective acoustic embrace.

From the late Middle Ages to the Renaissance, according to historian Richard Trexler, the diocese of Florence was made up of multiple interlocking hierarchies of diverse privileges and exemptions within which the bishop sought to assert his authority by unifying disparate liturgical practices. This included

FIG. 74 The shouts and trumpet blasts of the Israelites walking around the walls of Jericho with Joshua. Lorenzo Ghiberti, detail from the Joshua panel of the eastern baptistery doors, the "Gates of Paradise," Florence, 1425–52, gilt bronze. Photo by author.

the regulation of bells. Essentially, this meant affording primacy to the cathedral bells in ringing for divine offices.[45] This and several other characteristics of the Florentine soundscape emerge from the *Mores*. The bells of the cathedral activated a corresponding weekly and annual rhythm of sounds. Ringing in a particular sequence to mark vespers on Saturday evenings and matins early on Sunday mornings, they gave a distinct sound to the day of the Lord, which was reserved for the church by the prohibition on labor. On Saturday evening and Sunday morning, therefore, the first Squilla sounded for a long interval, joined then by the other Squilla in the same way. The Clero then joined them, ringing in a similar manner. After a pause, the Cagnazza was rung, and then all the bells rang together to complete the sequence (figure 75).[46] Weekdays had their own particular subrhythms. At matins the sequence began with the sole voice of the Squilla for a long interval, followed by the continuous ring of the other Squilla before the Cagnazza chimed in. The fourth sequence required a pause, after which the Squillonem rang alone.[47] The sequences for weekdays began the same way, but the Clero, which was associated with calling the clergy, was absent, and there was no celebratory ringing of all the bells together.

The regulations that governed the bells of the cathedral would also punctuate the daily soundscape by giving a specific sonic quality to important feast days in the Florentine liturgical calendar. They marked the intersection of the seasonal calendar and daily ringing schedules. Solemn feast days were defined by much more elaborate aural sequences than the weekly Sunday markers, beginning with all the bells ringing together. In the second part the small bell rang alone, followed by two bells ringing together. The fourth part repeated the first, with all the bells ringing together.

The sequence for Easter, however, was set within a much longer temporal arc. Florentines would have experienced a gradual sonic crescendo that led to a dramatic silent caesura to mark the crucifixion on Good Friday, followed by the climactic peals of joy that

began on Holy Saturday at vespers to begin the feast of the Resurrection. Lent season began inauspiciously with the bells accompanying the sounds of the Mass, hymns, and prayers, which enlivened the interior of the cathedral, sending out the sacred message to the rest of the city. Bells marked the office of sext and then rang to signal the Mass that followed. At nones and

FIG. 75 According to the *Mores*, to announce the beginning of the feast on Sunday, the four bells in the cathedral rang on Saturday at vespers and again at matins the next morning in the following sequence (illustrated above). The first Squilla rang for an extended period of time (*solam per magnum sive per longum spatium*). It was accompanied by the second Squilla ringing in the same manner (*attamen parum*). Then the Clero joined the other two before a pause (*parum simul*), after which, the Cagnazza began ringing (*aliqua mora intermissa*), finally accompanied by all the bells ringing together (*campanas simul parva mora transact*).

vespers the first and the second Squilla were rung separately after the Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus was recited. They rang from that point until the recitations of the Paternoster began, after which the third bell was rung (Clerus?). The fourth bell (Cagnazza?) was rung to mark the end of the Agnus Dei, but if it was a feast of the *novem lectionum*, or Saturday, then all four bells rang together.[48]

Despite the fact that deferring to the cathedral's priority in ringing bells was a conventional acoustic way of rendering honor to that institution and was enshrined in law, ancient privileges accorded to the Badia must have been the reason for its right to ring first for vespers before Sunday. It was upon hearing this that the cathedral began to ring its own call to prayer.[49] In Dante's *Paradiso* it is the sound of the bell of the Badia ringing the canonical hours, and not the cathedral, that stirs the memory of an echo of a Florence long past, whose symbolic dimensions were explored in chapter 1.[50] Due to its venerable status within the Florentine community, the Badia was exempt from certain synodal laws. For example, along with the parish churches under its jurisdiction, it did not have to wait for the cathedral bell to ring for the canonical hours, a privilege encoded in 1327.[51] It was, according to Trexler, part of a series of provisions that demonstrated the federative character of the church's hierarchy, where priories, chapels, and *pievi* would all exhibit the same honor to their superiors.

The last bell to be heard before Good Friday was the one that rang for the masses held in the baptistery for the Last Supper on Thursday.[52] This silence was a crucial part of the aural rhythm of Holy Week, when minute and complex regulations governed the cathedral bells between Lent and the Monday after Easter. Mimicking the silence of the apostles at this point in the Passion, the more muted sound of a piece of wood was used to congregate the people for the celebration of the divine mystery.[53] On Saturday, a messenger was sent to the church of Santa Maria Sopra Porta to light the candles and return with them to the cathedral, where the Mass was celebrated with the priest singing the Gloria in Excelsis Deo. It was at this point that a single ring of all the cathedral bells announced the celebration, as all the other churches could now ring their bells in response.[54]

The editor of the *Mores* notes that it was the Florentine pope Leo X who issued the decree in 1521 that no church anywhere could ring before the cathedral on Holy Saturday, as a matter of honor owed to the mother church, and by extension the Holy See. He points out that this provision was already in force in Florence by 1327 from decisions made under the authority of the first synod,[55] suggesting that Leo X consciously transferred a Florentine acoustic detail to Rome and made it law for the rest of Christendom. The same synodal law also forbade the ringing of any church bells for a divine office before the cathedral, and prescribed fines for contravention.[56] This meant that every day, instead of an acoustic exchange that was determined by a dialogic relationship between more or less equal partners, Florentine churches enacted the hierarchy between center and periphery established by the official auditory dissemination of ritual meaning throughout the city. In the case of the sacred soundscape, the motive was subordination rather than communication, since the bells were effectively sending the same message to each other in order to aurally display the vertical hierarchy of religious institutions horizontally across the city (figure 76). The rectors of individual churches, moreover, had to be constantly taking account of the city's sacred sounds. Each church that answered the cathedral bells acknowledged this overarching acoustic hierarchy,

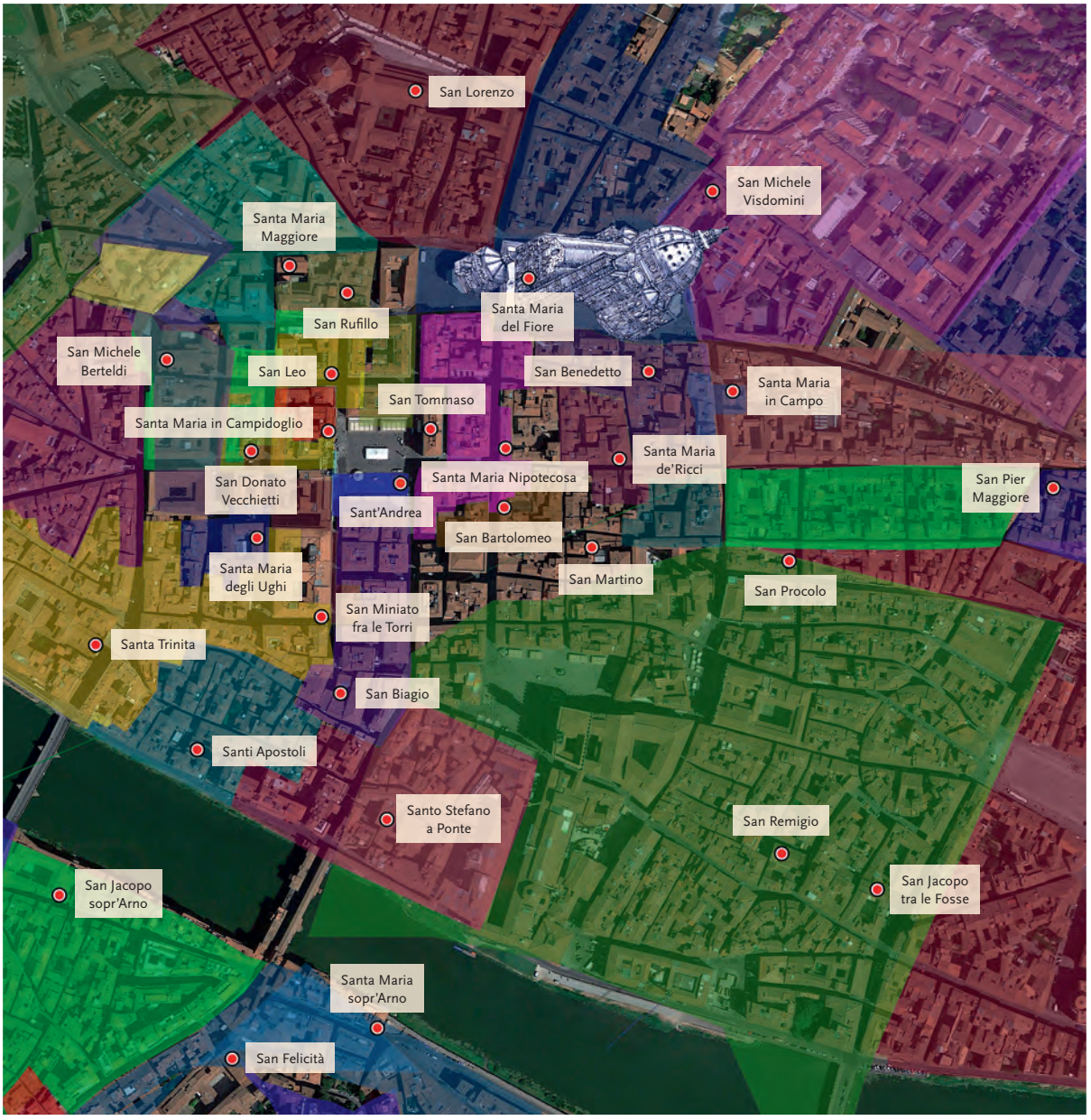


FIG. 76 A map visualizing the topography of Florence's parishes in the center of the city. Note that parish churches are often situated at the edges of the parish community, and some, like San Jacopo tra le Fosse, lie outside the area created by those belonging to the parish. This map was constructed using data taken from the ducal Decima of 1561, which has been geographically coded onto a geo-rectified online version of the Bonsignori map by the DECIMA team at the University of Toronto, under the direction of Nicholas Terpstra. http://decima.chass.utoronto.ca/. Author's overlay in Google Earth. Map data © 2015 Google.

defining the borders within which they submitted to the spatial authority of larger bells.

On Easter Sunday, matins and vespers were rung in the four sequences of the holiest feast days. The following Monday would be the start of a week-long series of postpaschal feasts that were constantly punctuated by the sound of bells. On that morning the large bell rang after the popular Mass in the baptistery, which led to another Mass in the cathedral, which was followed by a long single pattern of all the bells ringing together to assemble the clergy and the populace. This ringing is specifically described as "*a distesa*, a generally celebratory mode of bell ringing, rather than the more sober and ominous sound of bells rung *a stormo* or *a martello*."[57] After a certain interval, all the bells rang again while the cross and vestments were being prepared. A third lengthy sounding of all the bells then followed, which led to the recitation of the Stetit Angelus, during which the assembly, with all the clergy and the congregation, began its first of three daily processions to different Florentine parish churches. San Pier Maggiore was the first destination of Easter Monday, followed by the churches of San Paolo and San Lorenzo. Along the way, the text gives clear instructions that the bells of the churches along the parade route had to ring when the cortege passed, while participants in the procession had to sing to the relics of the saints they passed en route, creating an acoustic dialogue between architecture and community (figure 77).[58]

Franklin Toker sees this series of processions as a strategy enacted by the late medieval cathedral chapter to ground its flagging civic authority directly in the streets by maintaining liturgical links to these old parish churches. In doing so, he suggests that the routes slowly inscribed a cross onto the topography of the old Roman core of the city along the Roman *cardo* and *decumanus*.[59] However, as the *Mores* makes clear, the relations between the clergy, the faithful, their saints, and their churches was a function of a complex acoustic dialogic exchange of voices and bells, people and buildings, each recognizing the presence of the other and incorporating the larger urban environment into a sacred urban harmony expanding out, through the movement of bodies, from the cathedral.

The sound of the remaining four feast days after Easter was much the same, where processions were made to the churches of San Paolo and San Lorenzo, respectively. However, each day more bells rang, more often, and for longer periods, signifying levels of increasing ritual and temporal holiness. For example, on the fourth day after Easter all the bells rang together, at length, for the procession to San Lorenzo itself.[60] Considering all of the other conventional and procedural rings that occurred, this had to be the noisiest week of the Florentine calendar (figure 76).

The *Mores* goes on to describe the sequence of sounds that characterized the major feast days, and they all share several common traits. The practice of sounding vespers on the day before a feast day, along with ringing for matins on the following morning, the day of the feast itself, led Florentines into the vigil as the day receded toward darkness and continued to accompany them as dawn broke. Each feast day had a repetitive framework that would establish its place within a general category of holy rituals distinct from other acoustic markers, such as the canonical hours, justice, and civic celebrations, which are discussed below. Differences between the feasts were relational rather than absolute, gradually transforming across the entire liturgical calendar like successive episodes of a single narrative. These sounds prepared the way toward salvation through the logic of acoustic repetition throughout the city, so that its effects were

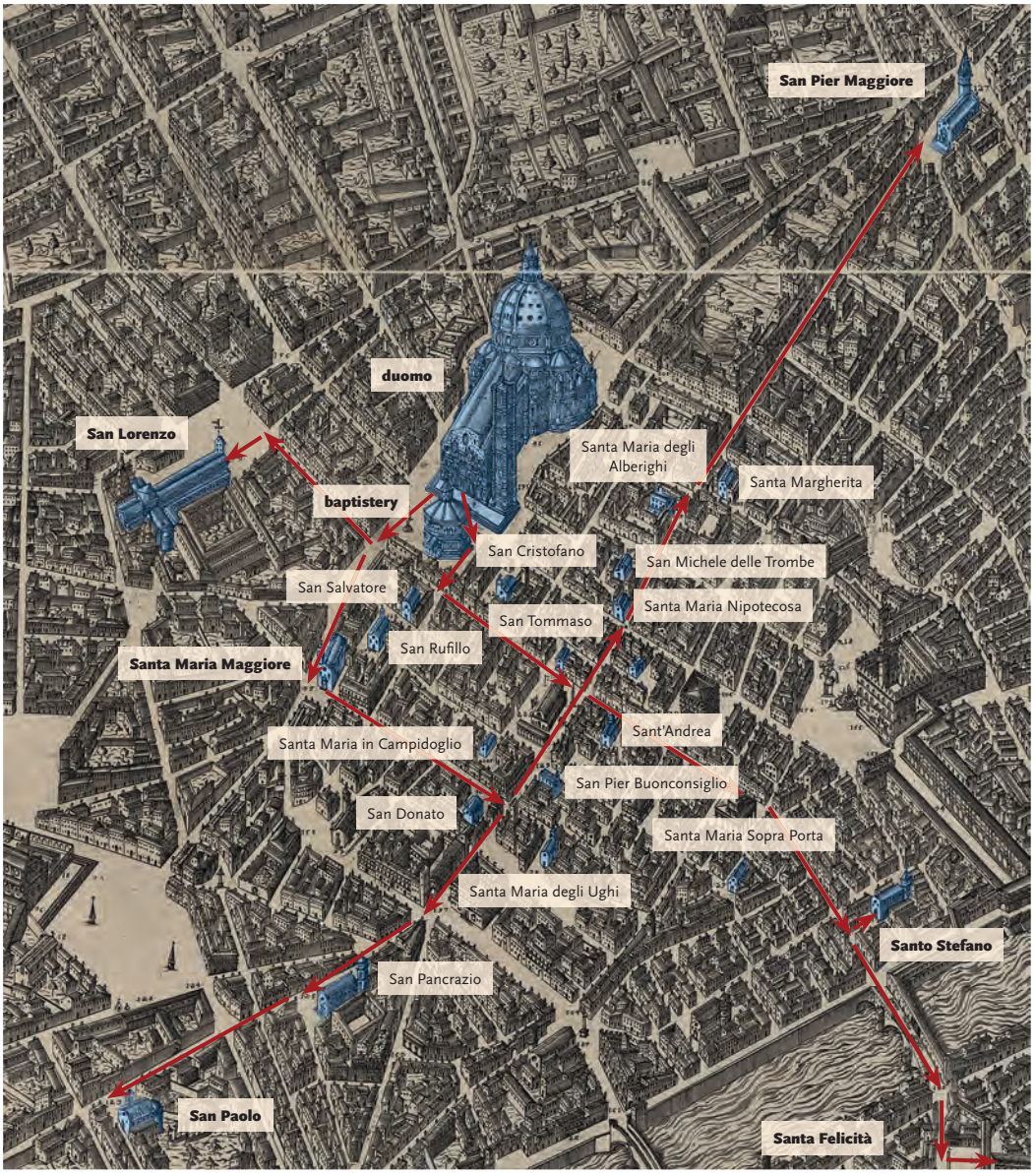


FIG. 77 A map highlighting the routes (after Toker) of the postpaschal processions, marking the churches visited on each route. Churches along the route have also been highlighted and named in bold text, as those that may have participated in the call-and-response sequences between bells and voices outlined in the *Mores et consuetudines*. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

both temporary and recursive, both ephemeral and endlessly anticipated. In addition, the bells were also part of a sacred dialogue that was constituted by the sounds of the Mass and the singing of prayers. Bells interacted with voices in a formulaic incantation that spanned space and time. They linked masses between the baptistery and the cathedral, ritual illumination between the cathedral and Santa Maria Sopra Porta, and many churches to the cathedral during solemn processions. The voices chanting in rhythm inside

were relayed by the rhythm of bells outside. Bells brought the sound of the holy office, the Mass, or the prayer to the city as a whole, sanctifying its spaces, caring for its souls, and calling its bodies together.

Bells also linked the movements of the faithful around the city. They sent out, welcomed, and followed formal processions that wound their way through the city. Spatially, this is crucial to understanding the way that the sacred overlaid its own topography onto the city. This acoustic topography represented the hierarchy of churches while it bound together local sacred spaces. While the civic soundscape, as will be seen, attempted to erase the differences of communities, subsuming them under a common Florentine voice, the diocese acknowledged and expressed those differences through this acoustic dialogue. When the bells of churches rang at the approach of the procession, they were responding with deference to the cathedral that had honored them with its presence. Each aural exchange defined a space animated by ritual practice. It made manifest local differences within the context of a procession of clergy and populace, assembled together to experience those differences in acoustic terms. At the same time, Florentines around the city could map out the sacred topography by listening to the ebb and flow of the chorus of bells as they rang in sequence, following the parade aurally and knowing just where the holy procession was at any given moment. In this way the sacred power of the ritual liturgy extended out to sanctify individual neighborhoods and generate a sense of what it meant to belong to the Florentine diocese. It bound neighborhood affiliation in a symbolic way to a central authority through the interaction of voices and bells. The topography of the procession demonstrated the manner in which the sacred status of the city had to be mobile and flexible. As Edward Muir has stated, this mobility of the sacred "conspired to give every major neighborhood and its chief lay patrons a chance to demonstrate their charisma to the entire city."[61]

Building a Civic Speaking Architecture

The dynamic sonic hierarchies of the Florentine diocese constituted the aural framework within which the popular republican reform governments that emerged in the thirteenth century constructed their own acoustic systems. In need of assembling their councils, uniting communities in space, and creating a reliable mode of mass communication, these struggling administrations drew on the inherent power of bells to reorder the city's spatial jurisdictions. Tracing the casting, placement, replacing, repairing, and control of bells in this period reveals a general pattern in which periods of crisis and reform are accompanied by a reorganization of the city's administration through a tripartite system of texts (new laws), images (new neighborhood flags), and sounds (new bells).[62] In order to ground their authority, the politics of reform demanded the coordination of the visual, verbal, and audible domains.

The story of the civic soundscape cannot be cut off from the history of Florentine towers, in both their vertical orientations and their horizontal distribution. As a result, the civic soundscape constitutes an independent architectural and campanalogical history. The dense vertical cityscape of Florence expressed the overlapping borders of private, public, and sacred zones that were constantly renegotiated within the city.[63] The private medieval towers of Florence's historically fractious clans demarcated densely packed zones that often protected neighborhood churches and courtyards (figure 78). Unadorned, they projected a mute and faceless profile (figure 79). Fortified, they stood

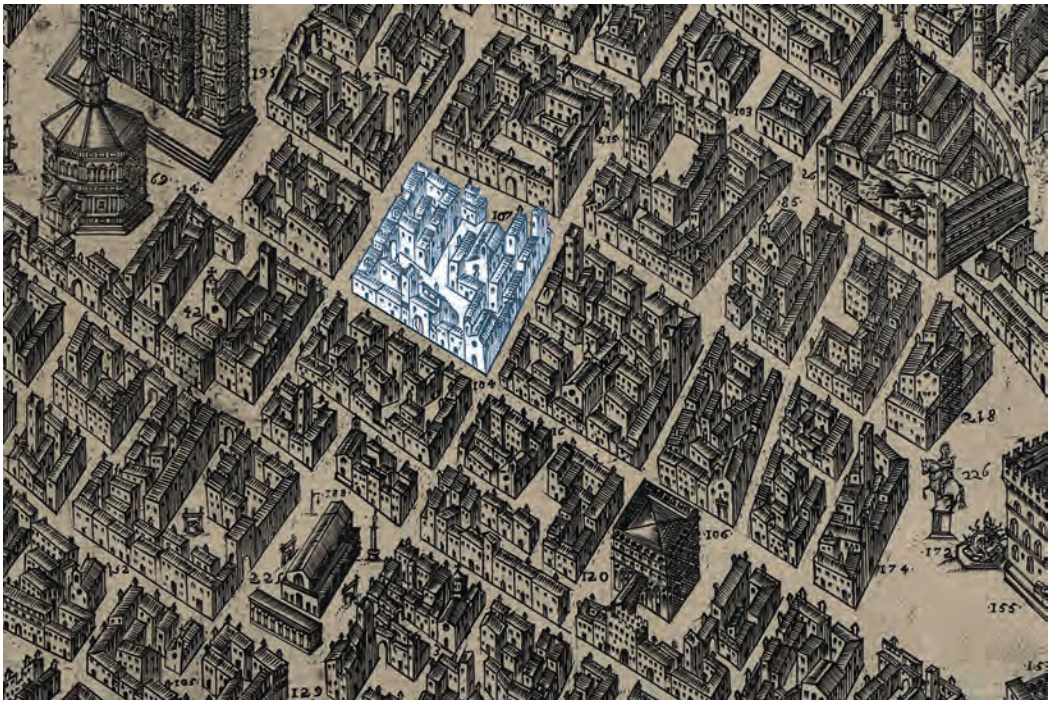


FIG. 78 Dense urban enclaves in the old center of the city, one highlighted here just south of the cathedral complex. Even in the late sixteenth century, the inward-looking structure of the older (*consorterie*) tower houses persisted in the layout of the central urban blocks of Florence. Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

defiantly as an image of military and political power. Outfitted with temporary balconies, they organized networks of urban violence. As topographical nodes, they continually threatened the political geography of the city with a contentious topography of alliances, feuds, pacts, and vendettas. These towers were at the forefront of experiments and conflicts that constituted the urban development of Florence, where they expressed the relations between older forms of spatial politics and newer policies of urban planning, between the fractious family-based tower societies (*consorterie*) and the increasingly powerful trade-based corporate groups (*arti*) that were establishing the ideological and social foundations of the Florentine republic.[64]

Amid this ominous architectural silence, the city's public buildings—its communal palaces—appropriated the acoustic mechanism of the church—its cathedral, its mendicant orders, and its parish churches—and responded with the construction of a speaking architecture dedicated to the political ideals of the ascendant *popolo*. These new towers presented a more decorative profile, and their necessary openness contrasted with the older, blank façades of the private defensive towers of inward-looking medieval enclaves (figure 80).

Florentine policies of acoustic state-building date back to at least 1250. The first popular government set the groundwork for a guild-based regime that would characterize the republic in various formations until the early sixteenth century. Brunetto Latini, one of the most important political philosophers of the Middle Ages, served in this regime until its fall and his exile to France in 1260. During this period, some of the most advanced experiments in republican self-government

FIG. 79 Torre della Castagna: the mute façade of the old defensive towers that protected the tower societies of medieval Florence and that fell under strict regulation with the establishment of the Florentine Republic and its Ordinances of Justice. Councils of the *secondo popolo* met here before the completion of the Palazzo Vecchio. Photo by author.

were set in motion, not least of which were the strategies surrounding the deployment and ringing of the city's new bells from renovated towers. One of the first acts of the newly established regime, in fact, was to place a bell in a tower and legislate that it ring to assemble, and therefore define, the *popolo* as a distinct communal body. This body would undergo successive transformations, expansions, and constrictions, but the civic bells that would continue to ring in the *popolo*'s name would always signal the universal aspirations of this class. They would offer the possibility of inclusion, however illusory, through the way they choreographed daily life as a common bond between all inhabitants. As a result, the sound of civic bells played a direct role in bringing that new Florentine community into being, one that was supposed to supersede the more particularized communities and factions that had continually vied for political supremacy, and create a cohesive audience for the spectacle of republican political authority. These bells were rung to create spatial jurisdictions over which the government claimed authority. Consequently, following the casting, placement, and ringing of bells is crucial to understanding the political development of the Florentine state. It shows how the success of that ideology was tied up intimately with architectural control over the acoustic dimensions of the city.

As architectural monuments, Florentine bell towers were the central architectural noise-makers in a complex acoustically defined series of distinct but ephemeral territories (figure 81). They functioned not

FIG. 80 A view of the campanile of the Palace of the Podestà (Bargello) from the back of the cathedral looking down via del Proconsolo. Photo by author.

only as monumental vertical visual nodes but also as horizontal spatial acoustic transmitters—radiating messages out in successive intensifying and receding sonic waves. The resulting temporal territories, emerging, expanding, contracting, and fading, created and reinforced this hierarchically arranged and temporally defined soundscape, making them a critical spatial organizing principle of the city. They inflected the way urban space was formed, experienced, and recorded, injecting spaces with a temporal dimension, creating multiple zones of legal exclusion, spiritual community, political anxiety, and social identity.

According to Villani, after the creation of certain elected bodies and the installation of civic officials in 1250, the "first and most basic of their innovations was the reorganization of urban space."[65] This

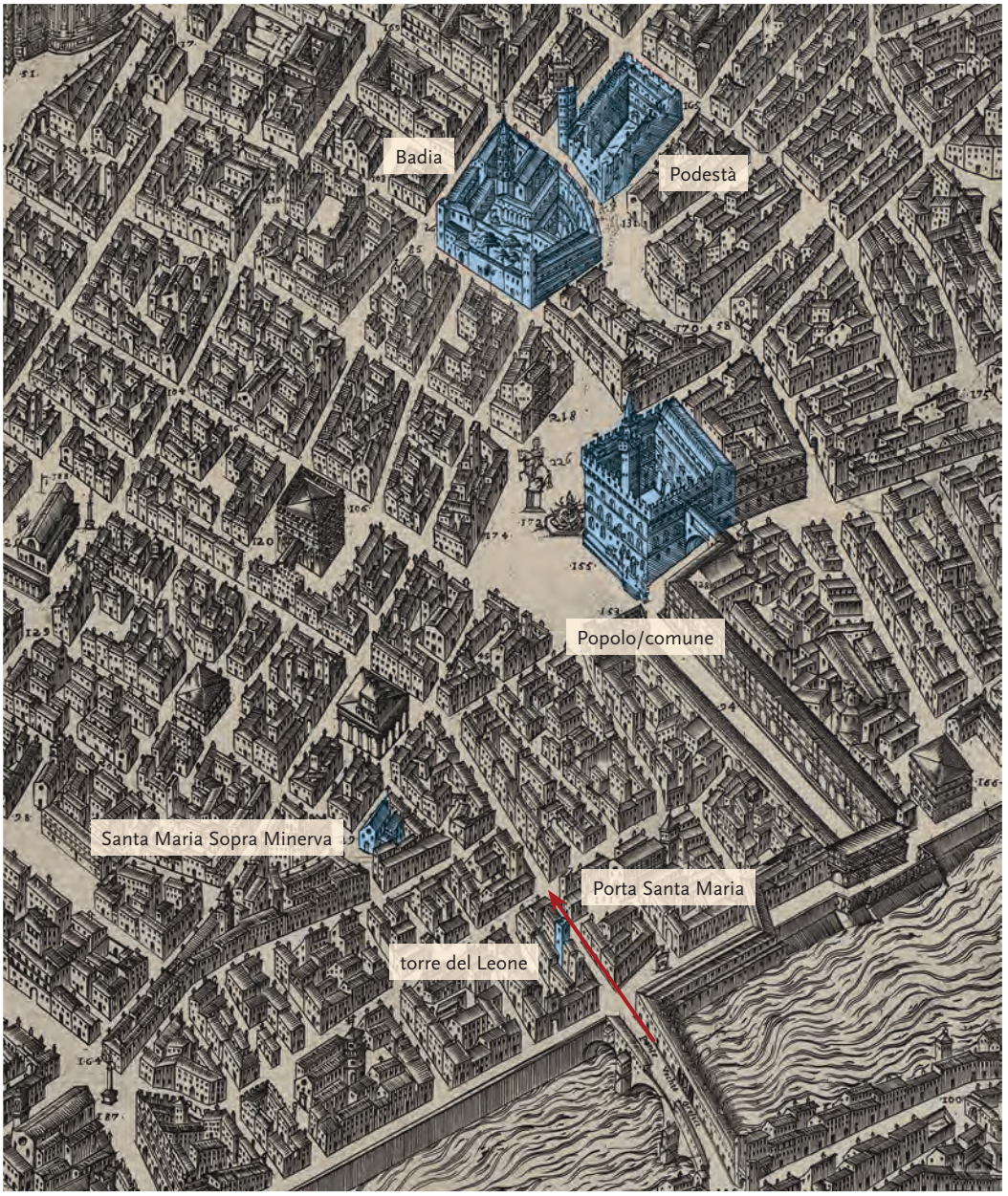


FIG. 81 The topography of civic bells in Florence from the founding of the *primo popolo* (first popular government) in 1250 through the end of the republic. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

FIG. 82 Postwar reconstruction of the torre del Leone (Amidei), near the place where the Porta Santa Maria once stood, and part of the old Giandonati family complex. Named probably for the lion heads that still project from the reconstructed tower, this was the probable site of the first communal bell in 1250, according to the fourteenth-century chronicler Giovanni Villani. Photo by author.

reorganization involved the creation of flags defining twenty district-based militia companies "that served as a symbol of neighborhood identity and solidarity."[66] "And they had a bell made, which the Capitano kept in the Tower of the Lion" (figure 81).[67] The terse reference to a bell hides an extremely costly, complicated, and time-consuming undertaking.[68] It is a testament to the importance of a bell and tower in creating an official voice that would speak in tandem with the creation of visual signs for the new popular regime. The bell was part of the political strategy of defining the Florentine *popolo* against both elite magnates and disenfranchised workers. When it was sounded by the *Capitano*, the *popolo* was required to assemble in the square into newly created civic bodies under the flags that defined them.[69] Sound, vision, space, and politics together simultaneously brought into being a reconfigured city.

The location of what may have constituted the first truly public or civic bell of Florence represents an important decision. The Tower of the Lion (torre del Leone), which belonged at the time to the powerful Amidei family and dated back to at least 1165, was located in the heart of the Ghibelline neighborhood just north of the Ponte Vecchio on via Por Santa Maria (figure 82).[70] It was part of the founding myth of the Florentine *popolo*'s claim to authority, for it was here that the Amidei and their allies gathered to plot the murder of the young knight Buondelmonte de' Buondelmonti as revenge for his decision to abandon the marriage arranged for him and one of their daughters in favor of a rival clan.[71] In the fourteenth-century popular imagination, this legend became a symbolic means to explain the useless and petty violence of Florentine elites, whose practice of vendetta justice was an obstacle to the creation of a virtuous and unified Florentine community.[72] Placing a public bell, one that symbolized the popular wedge driven between the elite factionalism that characterized the Guelf and Ghibelline families in Florence, in the geographic heart of their power, on one of the most heavily traveled routes through the city was an act that would

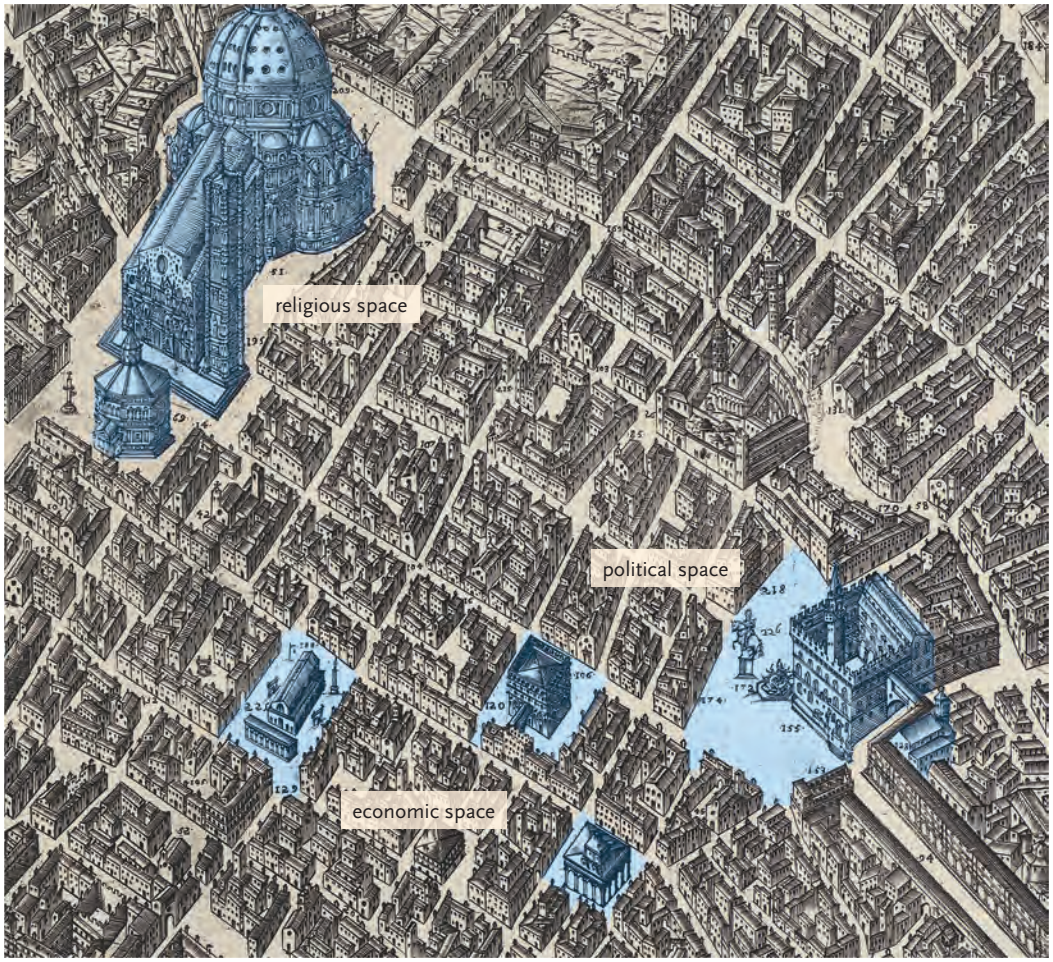


FIG. 83 Although in practice Florence's principal piazzas remained heterogeneous, there was an official understanding of the discrete topography of the political, religious, and economic zones of Florence. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

acoustically cleanse these spaces of violent factional revenge.

Although Villani does not specify, it would seem likely that the militias assembled at the Palace of the Capitano, the site where the *popolo* would establish its long-term headquarters, culminating in the construction of the Palace of the Priors at the turn of the fourteenth century, and its later expansion, which would ultimately engulf the Capitano's residence.[73] Situated at a distance from both the religious and the economic center of the city—the cathedral complex and the Mercato Vecchio—this area was still geographically central enough within the soon-to-be constructed final circuit of the walls—"quasi nel mezzo della città," as Goro Dati would later describe it (figure 83).[74] Before laws limiting the height of private towers, as well as the dismantling and clearing of the densely built properties for the city's new government square (Piazza dell Signoria), the nearby sound of the *popolo*'s first bell had already established the acoustic foundations of this zone of civic authority, military organization, and judicial administration. When the

popolo was threatened, the Capitano was obliged to ring this bell.[75] The old family tower, therefore, was made, literally, to speak with a new voice, to a new constituency, in a newly defined territory.[76] This was the founding moment of the Florentine civic soundscape.

Not far from the torre del Leone, the Martinella, the most famous bell of the emerging Florentine republican regime, hung in the church of Santa Maria Sopra Porta. Sounding for the assembling Florentine armies, it also accompanied them out into battle (figure 84). Villani tied this bell forever to the first popular government when it was captured by the enemy on the battlefield during the disastrous defeat of the Guelf government's troops by the Ghibelline forces in 1260. It became the battle's most tragic casualty and a symbol of the regime's demise, its lost sound living on as a powerful but distant memory of the venerated first popular government (*primo popolo*).[77]

When it rang to announce military operations, the Martinella was transferred from its home in Santa Maria Sopra Porta to the eponymous Por(ta) Santa Maria, one of the city's former gates in the eleventh-century walls and now occupying the ancient heart of the city. There it would ring day and night, accompanied by heralds announcing the enemy against whom the military campaign was to be waged (figure 81).[78] Spanning the full decade of the *primo popolo*, the Martinella was a pendant to the bell that hung in 1250 in the torre del Leone. It cannot be a coincidence that these two bells, as the voices of internal and external security, occupied the two sites most intimately connected to the Buondelmonte legend (figure 81). In addition, moving the Martinella to the gate when it rang for war would have solidified the acoustic reconfiguration of the entire neighborhood, sonically vacating the arrogance, insults, pacts, and vendettas with which it was associated. At the heart of Florentine economic life, along the busiest commercial route in Florence, these two bells established the model for Florentine civic bell ringing that would be codified in the city's statutes: a dialogue between paired bells that shared the task of organizing Florentine political identity.

FIG. 84 The mobile bell of the Florentine forces, the Martinella, which accompanied them from the church of Santa Maria Sopra Porta to the Porta Santa Maria and out onto the battlefield. In this battle with the Sienese in 1260, the Martinella was lost and never returned to Florence. Fourteenth-century manuscript of Giovanni Villani's *Nuova Cronica*, illustrated by the workshop of Pacino di Buonaguida, Bib. Apostolica Vaticana, MS Chigi L VIII.296, fol. 92r.

The Bells of the Podestà (Bargello)

Originally known as the Palace of the Commune or the Podestà (Palazzo del Comune, del Podestà), the Bargello was the most exceptional architectural expression of the political program of the *primo popolo* (figure 85).[79] It replaced a more migrant administration—more sympathetic to the Ghibelline cause—of the

FIG. 85 View of the Palace of the Podestà (Bargello) from the Palazzo Vecchio, built by the republican regime between 1250 and 1260. Photo by author.

early thirteenth-century councils, which met in, among other places, the houses of the Amidei, the proprietors of the torre del Leone.[80] The campanile of the Bargello was built over a preexisting tower. Of the four principal Florentine campanili, those of the cathedral and the Badia are independent structures, while those of the Bargello and Palazzo Vecchio reconfigured private family towers, which were heightened and renovated to perform their new tasks of public address (figures 58, 86).[81] The first recorded mention of the Bargello's tower referred to it as the Volognana, after Geri da Volognano, who, along with other Ghibellines, was supposedly imprisoned there in 1267.[82] According to Uccelli, the members of the magistracy known as the tower officials, who were charged with overseeing urban policies, met here, and he describes the image of a tower, sculpted in low relief like that seen on the Ponte Vecchio, on the architrave above the entrance to the tower, which was removed in the nineteenth century (figure 87).[83]

Notably, the palace was built against the tower and sits on a visibly distinct axis, which, along with the different styles of the high-quality masonry work that defines each structure, visually distinguishes them as

FIG. 86 The bell tower of the Podestà (Bargello), where the separate structures of tower and palace can easily be distinguished by both the color of the stones and the ways in which they have been dressed by the stonecutters. Photo by author.

FIG. 87 Highlighted relief carving (*center*) of the tower symbol on the façade of one of the shops of the Ponte Vecchio, indicating the public magistracy in charge of the bridge, the Ufficiali della Torre. Photo by Douglas Dow.

separate entities (figure 88). The first bell cote of the tower was at the level just above the present roofline and is now filled in.[84] What now serves as the summit of the tower would have likely served as the base for a more elaborate belfry, since the merlons at the corners are actually structural pilasters. They would have allowed for a cantilevered structure to be mounted on top, not unlike the projecting arches of the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio (figure 89).[85] The tower was raised to its present height not later than the beginning of the 1330s, a dating based on the traces of the fire left in the intrados of the vaults underneath the second belfry erected there to support it.[86]

A bell was hanging in the Bargello (Palazzo del Comune) no later than 1285, around the time of the rise of the second popular government (*secondo popolo*), when there was already discussion of a bell ringer; in that year it rang as the Florentine army prepared for battle against Pisa.[87] A provision in the council minutes states that the bell of the commune (*campana communis*) housed in the tower was to ring daily for the army, according to the usual practice.[88] This bell, which can be identified with some certainty as the bell of the Podestà, would become a major protagonist in the daily acoustic regime.

There was also another smaller bell (*campanellam*) referred to in October 1290 in the Palace of the Podestà, one that called the councillors together and that was already in need of repair, while as many as six bell ringers were appointed to this bell of the councils.[89] Already, therefore, before the political reforms of 1293 that would enshrine the antimagnate ideology of the *popolo*, the bells that resided in the Palace of the Podestà functioned according to customary uses that

would continue throughout the republican period, assembling armies and councils.[90]

In May 1303, Florentine forces captured the well-fortified Pistoian fortress at Montale and razed it to the ground. The only thing spared destruction was its bell, which was brought back to Florence in triumph and mounted in the campanile of the Podestà.[91] With its particularly fine tone, it became the bell of the messengers (*messi*) and was called the Montanina (figure 90).[92] Taking bells as war trophies was a common practice in European society, not only because of their expense, but because their quality was difficult to predict in casting. In addition, the ring of a specific bell was a powerful way in which the legacy of such victories could be regularly and generally diffused throughout the city, in order to allow successive generations to participate directly in a shared civic memory. The loss of a bell threatened the ability of a culture to express its identity; its removal, silencing, and reconfiguration often resulted in confusion, fear, violence, and legal repercussions, revealing how bells not only created but also symbolized a society, making the fate of both inextricably tied together.[93]

As a kind of acoustic vindication for the loss of the Martinella, the Montanina took over the task of sounding when the Florentine armies prepared and left for battle. The material weight of such a task became evident when the bell broke under the stress of continuous pealing for the forces assembling for war against Lucca in 1325, a bad omen.[94] It most likely remained in a ruinous state until it was melted down and recast in 1384 and inscribed with the names and trades of the executive council (*signoria*), which resided in the Palace of the Priors.[95] Such a detail appears rather strange. Although listing the names of the priors who sat on the executive council in personal family records was a matter of great pride, and official lists of those

FIG. 88 The Bargello, showing the distinct axes and masonry techniques for the twelfth-century bell tower (*left*) and the thirteenth-century palace (*right*). Photo by author.

FIG. 89 View of the belfry of the Palace of the Podestà (Bargello). The corner pilasters of the crenellated summit are structural and may have allowed for the construction of a more elaborate and ornamented bell housing. Photo by author.

FIG. 90 The position of the Montanina, the bell of the Podestà, in the bell tower of the Bargello. Photo by author.

eligible men were regularly vetted in special council meetings (*squittini*), rarely were individuals ever memorialized in official symbols of the Florentine state. The Florentine lily (*giglio*) and the red cross of the Florentine *popolo*, along with the arms of the king of France, the pope, the city's guilds, confraternities, the patron saint (John the Baptist) and the Virgin, were generally the only images allowed to grace public property. They functioned as collective signs, reflecting the corporate, rather than the personal, nature of the Florentine regime, under which expressions of individual identity and self-interest were discouraged in the name of a universal public image.

In 1333, the tower of the Podestà underwent modifications to allow the bell to be rung more easily,[96] and by 1337, Uccelli claims, the other bell that rang from the campanile was called the Mangona, similarly named after the fortress from which it was taken.[97] Later, under Duke Cosimo I (reigned 1537–74), the Montanina assumed the name of the *campana delle armi* when it rang at the fifth and fourth hours of the night in winter and summer respectively. Servants caught out in the city with arms, in the absence of their patrons, were to lose their hands. It also sounded as the condemned were led to the gallows and when capital sentences were carried out.[98] By the time it

sounded exclusively for public executions, Florentines called it the *campana del Bargello*, giving rise to the saying "to be like the bell of the Bargello, which rings for infamy."[99]

The Bells of the Priors (Palazzo Vecchio)

In 1294, a series of legislative maneuvers defined the trajectory of the communal bells that would be destined for the tower of the new seat of the popular government, known variously as the Palazzo dei Priori/Signori. Significantly, this activity again followed immediately in the wake of popular reforms instituted by the *secondo popolo* as it responded to political threats by the drafting of the Ordinances of Justice in 1293.[100] In the Council of One Hundred (*consiglio dei cento*), several acts were passed to cast a bell for the new institution of the priorate, the city's highest executive body. Although at the time they had no permanent architectural home and no tower of their own, the priors needed the sound of a bell to coordinate their meetings. Again, the casting of a bell constituted an essential part of a whole constellation of acts that created and legitimized such gatherings as public acts, regardless of the fact that the meetings were held at the houses of the powerful Cerchi family (figure 81).

On August 31, 1294, 600 lire were set aside to cast this bell (*campana facienda pro comuni*) for placement at the home where the priors met.[101] On November 9 of the same year, the council authorized the expenditure of 225 lire for the bell of the priors (*campana Priorum*).[102] Then, on December 31, 25 lire were allocated to build a wooden structure (*ediffitio lignaminis*) for the bell of justice (*campana Iustitie*).[103] On October 8, 1295, 300 lire were set aside to repair the bell of the *popolo* (*reparatione campane Populi*), and to cover it and repair the structure supporting it. However, confusingly, the figure of 300 lire is also mentioned in relation to the *campana Iustitie* on the very same day for the repair of its housing. Both bells were located at the palace where the priors lived.[104]

All of these names point to the fluid nature of the relationship between bells as objects and bells as distinct sounds on the urban horizon. The four bells referred to here may not correspond to four separate objects, but even if they do, these designations—"for the commune," "of the priors," "of justice," "of the people" (*pro Comuni, Priorum, Iustitie, Populi*)—already outline the overlapping principal categories that the Florentine soundscape was supposed to represent, bring into being, protect, promote, and celebrate: the city, its people, its government, and the struggle over justice. Most likely, these bells included extant and new bells that would eventually find a permanent home in the city's two communal towers. Bells were a combination of their placement, their function, and the time of their ringing, which allowed multiple names for the same object, whose dense materiality was undermined by its status as a fluid sonic signifier.

Ambiguity is also the product of a particular feature of bells and their relationship to the temporal rhythms and the spaces over which they presided. They possessed official names and often acquired popular ones based on why, when, and how they were rung.[105] This arose from the way in which sound was experienced in the urban milieu. Most bells were placed in towers and, more often than not, were not seen when they rang. The quality of their sound, furthermore, was the result of the physical constituents of the spaces in which they were heard. Therefore, their materiality as objects was often dissociated from their function as urban sounds. This fact explains why the sound of bells exists as an urban semiotic

dialogue independent from their materiality as large, expensive objects. Depending on the time, the reason, and the manner of ringing, Florentines applied different names to the same bells. Sounds proliferated, extended out, and divided according to a meaningful acoustic syntax that was not necessarily fixed in a direct and causal way to the multiple changing names and the appearance, silencing, disappearance, and return of old and new bells.

Before the completion of the tower of the Palace of the Priors, some sort of wooden structure housed the bell that the legislative council had commissioned for the priors and the Standard-Bearer of Justice. Evidence that this bell had replaced one hanging in the torre del Leone is given by Dino Compagni, who recounts how, in 1301, the priors rang the bell that was in their palace but notes that, in the climate of fear caused by renewed factional violence, the people did not assemble.[106] This bell could have been the original one cast for the *primo popolo*, which may also have been melted down and recast into a larger bell. But despite the fact that this was probably not the original bell, its sound was still heard as the sound of the regime.

It is not clear where this bell was placed, whether it rang from a window or from the roof of the Cerchi properties, or even one of their towers. Since the sonic range of a bell is greatly increased by the height from which it rings, the placement of the bell may have been linked to how much of the city the councilors wanted to alert to their meetings. Compagni's reference to the bell seems to indicate that it used to hang where the priors met, but evidence suggests that by the time he was writing about these events, it was already in the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio itself; he may have confused the place where they were meeting just at the time that the palace was nearing completion.[107] According to Marvin Trachtenberg, the priors had only transferred their council meetings to the new structure by 1302, a year later.[108] In 1304, a bell, which provisions state as having been in the tower of the Palace of the Capitano,[109] was moved to the incomplete tower of the Palazzo Vecchio.[110] This could have been the original bell cast in 1250, or its replacement, but still carried the memory of the original.

In 1304, the bell of the priors was placed in a wooden belfry on the incomplete tower of the Palazzo Vecchio (figure 91).[111] However, if, as is suggested, two bells were now located in the tower, one the bell that the priors had made for themselves, and the other the bell that had been rung from the tower of the Capitano to assemble the *popolo*, then by 1306 they both may have been judged insufficient in size and volume, because a much larger bell (*campana magna*)[112] was commissioned by the *consiglio dei cento* from the Pisan master Vannes Campanarius and his son Bentivenni. This bell would weigh 16,000 pounds (5,700 kg) and was completed by 1307.[113] Trachtenberg points out the probable embarrassment the government felt at having to erect a wooden belfry in the square because the tower was still under construction.[114] By 1308, however, the decision was made and funds set aside to raise this bell onto the roof of the palace, although the *campana magna* is not recorded in the newly completed tower until 1318.[115] This tower is clearly visible amid a dense aggregate of buildings in the Bigallo fresco along with the remaining wooden bell cote still sitting on the roof (figure 92).[116] Its former position on the roof of the palace was likely taken up by the bell of the *popolo*, which rang for the city's elected councils. The original bell of the Capitano, the one that was originally placed on the torre del Leone, may have been recast at this time into this larger *campana magna*, since that bell would become known as the

FIG. 91 View of the bell tower of the Palace of the Priors (Palazzo Vecchio) from the cupola of the cathedral. The temporary bell was placed on the roof of the palace just in front of the tower (cf. figure 92) before the completion of the latter. Photo by author.

FIG. 92 Detail of the fresco depicting the Madonna della Misericordia, where the temporary bell cote is just visible next to the tower of the Palace of the Priors. Madonna della Misericordia, Confraternity of the Bigallo, Florence, c. 1342. Photo by author.

Leone. The generational memory of bells expressed through the persistence of names was, ironically, one of their most durable aspects. The sounds they made quickly disappeared, but their repetitive utterances imprinted upon the collective memory a shared and enduring acoustic experience. Even when a bell was recast, the memories and associations embedded in it, in its particular voice, could persist, in a modified form, as a name or in a particular functional role.[117]

Perhaps because the Leone carried the memory of the original bell of the first popular government and because it was now, triumphantly, the largest, loudest, and most universal bell of the city, it would become the core around which the emerging acoustic regime was built, linking together government, judiciary, church, and common prayer.

Therefore, by the time the statutes of 1325 were drawn up, the *campana magna* (Leone) was ringing

from the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio. It was joined by the bell of the *popolo* in 1344,[118] which sounded to assemble the councils, when that bell was transferred from the roof "so that one better heard it from the Oltrarno, and throughout the city, [and] which was of a noble sound and grandeur."[119] In other words, to increase its audibility in an expanding city, the bell of the *popolo* was placed in a more prominent position, once again precisely at the moment of political crisis and reform. Florence had been rocked by an elite conspiracy, as well as the financial collapse of the giant Bardi and Peruzzi banks and the fiscal crisis brought on by protracted wars. Inviting the French aristocrat Walter of Brienne (duke of Athens) in 1343 to help deal with the political fallout of this predicament might have seemed like a good idea. However, as the duke consolidated his rule by allying with the *popolo*'s enemies both below and above them, the *popolo* consolidated its forces and ousted him from the city.[120] The triumphant popular government reinforced its civic voice by raising the prominence of the bell that carried its name and expanding its spatial reach. This link between a political community and the sound of a bell, where the characteristics of one were seamlessly transferred to the other, is underlined by the fact that it was the bell of the *popolo*, not the *campana magna* (Leone), that was rung, by force, to assemble the *popolo* against the elite conspiracy of 1340.[121] Inhabitants would have immediately understood the political resonances and social distinctions expressed by the sound of this bell.

The bell of the *popolo*, in turn, was replaced on the roof of the palace, according to Villani, by the bell taken from the Castello di Vernio in 1337.[122] It was to ring only in the case of fire, at nighttime, to alert the *maestri* in charge of fighting fires.[123] This bell, whose sound referred to the memory of a military victory, was joined by the bell taken from the defeated Pisan fortress of Toiano in 1363, which became the signal for merchant mealtimes.[124]

In the course of the fourteenth century, a new sound emerged on the soundscapes of major European cities. Although the invention of the mechanical clock is shrouded in mystery, it is linked to sites in central Italy and coincides with the development of the Florentine republic.[125] This new and ultimately more regular sound would eventually transform urban society's relationship to time, but early in its history, the clock was an expensive, clunky, and unreliable object that cities installed more for public prestige than for accurate timekeeping.[126] Florentines, never a community to shy away from competition, were among the earliest to install a public clock as a public expenditure. A fifteenth-century chronicler notes that the newly installed clock began to sound the hours on March 25, 1353 (Florentine New Year), from the tower of the Palazzo dei Signori.[127] A new clock bell was needed by 1397, which was cast by Simone di Lorenzo and Piero, his son, who hailed from the parish of Sant'Agnolo a Legnaio.[128] This bell was replaced in 1452 with bronze from another bell taken from the demolished tower of the old cathedral of Santa Reparata, which had been rebuilt and renamed Santa Maria del Fiore.[129]

Like the Bargello, the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio preexisted the foundation of the palace. This was not the usual case in Tuscany, as Trachtenberg points out. Most communal towers were built after the palaces they adorned, or sometimes no communal tower was ever built. Trachtenberg attributes the proliferation of civic towers in the fourteenth century to Florentine influence, with the dominating profile of this tower establishing the indispensability of the genre.[130] However, Florence was almost alone in truly

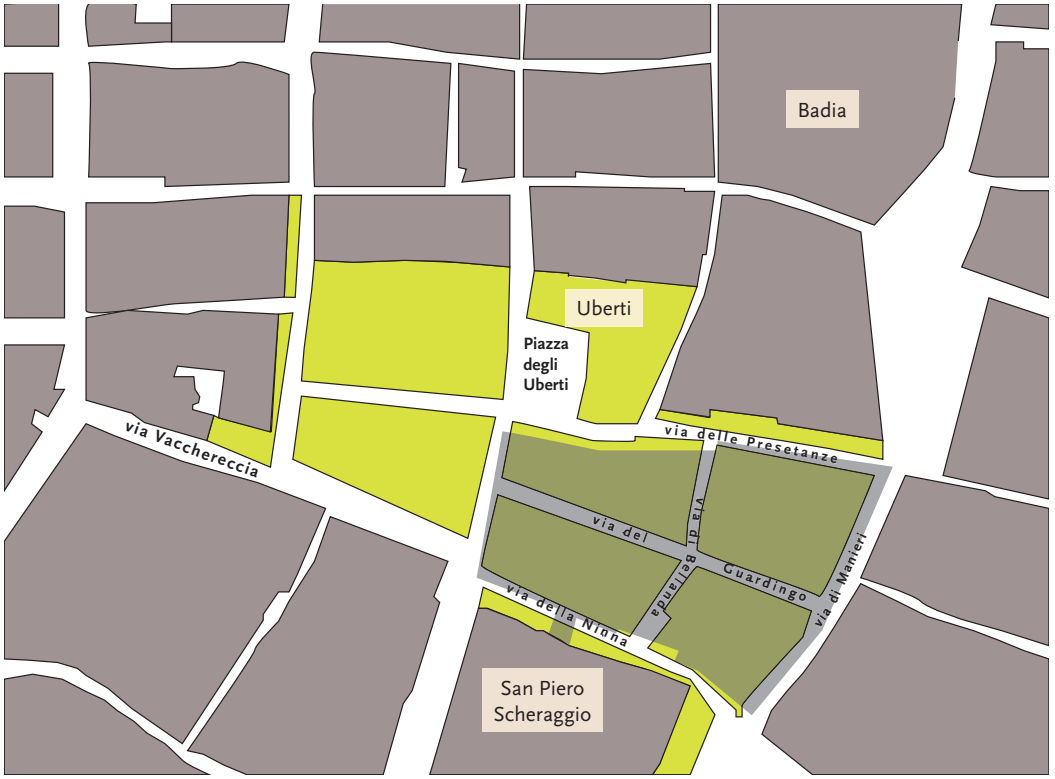


FIG. 93 *Platea ubertorum*: the approximate building lines of the properties of the Uberti family and the area around the Signoria before the construction of the piazza and its palace between 1299 and 1315. The yellow areas show structures demolished for the new government complex, and the footprint of the current Palazzo Vecchio (*shaded in lower right*) is visible under the street network that preceded it. Drawing by author.

embedding its communal ideology into architectural space through its consistent practice of visually transforming private buildings into public assets, whether they were destroyed enclaves transformed into public space, such as the razed buildings of the Uberti family that became the site of the original piazza before the palace, the *platea ubertorum*, or private towers made to speak with the voice of the commune (figure 93).[131] Incorporated into the site of the Palazzo Vecchio was the tower of the Foraboschi family. At the founding of the palace there was no "mandate" to turn it into the "extravagant" tower it became.[132] Like the Bargello, a smaller, simpler tower had held the more modest bell. In 1304, however, a wooden structure was built on the newly paved piazza, which allowed work to proceed on the tower's expansion.[133] This expansion, which relied on a complex system of infill and massive corbelling due to the narrow base that the Foraboschi tower provided, seems to have been the result of an increasing sense of the importance of communal bells as part of the arsenal of public power (figure 94). It was as if an enormously costly bell and the greatly increased size and complex design of the tower necessitated each other. This ensemble of monumental architecture and monumental bells formed part of a more coherent plan to construct an auditory landscape that united the city's administrative divisions into a single sonic entity. Only sound, in the form of a gigantic sixteen-thousand-pound bell, could psychologically dissolve the myriad socio-spatial borders

FIG. 94 View of the substructure of the bell tower of the Palazzo Vecchio (on the left with two doors) seen from the arcaded gallery. Trachtenberg has pointed out that the narrow passage on the right between the arcades and the tower makes it appear from the square that the tower is floating, when in fact the palace has been built around the preexisting tower, filling it in to support the massive belfry built above. Photo by author.

while leaving them topographically intact. The Florentine government was learning how to organize the city and its inhabitants within multiple, overlapping, independent, acoustic topographies constructed by the sound of bells.

From Morning to Evening: Orchestrating an Acoustic Regime

In the 1355 statutes, a separate rubric consolidates and formalizes the major moments of the daily civic ringing schedule, fixing a sonic armature upon which daily activities could be ordered.[134] This brief document forms the basis for the following reconstruction of the daily soundscape of early modern Florence and underpins the expanding interpretation of sound in this entire study. Compiled from legislation that dates back decades or more, the statutes consolidated clusters of legislation into composite rubrics that are themselves repetitive and confusing even as they attempt to render the sounds of the city into a comprehensible linguistic sequence. Pieces of legislation are extracted and combined, and actual practices are defined and transcribed, creating a kind of palimpsest of accumulated laws growing in complexity with each successive redaction. This is clear in both the increasing detail with which the ringing of bells is described and the confusing repetition of those descriptions in the statutes from the fourteenth to the fifteenth century.[135] These statutes name and rank four civic bells (figure 95). The largest bell, which hung in the Palazzo

FIG. 95 The four civic bells named by the 1355 Florentine statutes: the Leone and Popolo, installed in the towers of the Palace of the Priors (*left*), and the Podestà and Montanina, installed in the Palace of the Podestà (Bargello) (*right*). Photo by author.

Vecchio, was the Leone, and was accompanied by the bell of the *popolo*. The tower of the Bargello housed the bell of the Podestà and the smaller Montanina. The Popolo and the Podestà sounded for their respective councils, the Montanina rang for the tribunals, and the Leone rang for the announcements of military victories, the mobilization of the city's military forces, and the evening prayer of the Ave Maria.

In order to fully apprehend the dense system of communication that these bells enacted, one has to understand the ringing of bells not as separate acoustic moments, but as an integrated acoustic dialogue. Already in the early statutes there is evidence of this central aspect of communal bell ringing. For example, the response to fires was coordinated around the exchange between the church bells in the closest proximity to the fire, which alerted local inhabitants and the ringers in the Palazzo Vecchio, who rang the bell of the *popolo* to alert the rest of the city.[136] Similarly, the bell of the Capitano rang in response to the bell of the commune after the latter announced both the end and the beginning of the day. Failure to enact this dialogue between government authorities resulted in significant penalties, since what was at stake was control of urban time.[137] Like public space, public time was a construction of the city's authorities, whose job it was to maintain the integrity of a common temporal cycle. The sounds of bells were conceived and experienced as an extended series of interlocking sonic configurations across space. The Florentine day, therefore, was generated in the call and response between towers, across the city and along temporal rhythms that brought the axes of time and space into being for urban communities. Time and space were aurally constructed rhythms that permeated daily life,

generating the sonic infrastructure of the city, which bound society directly to the city's physical infrastructure. As a result, it was sound that performed the integration of the *urbs* and the *civitas*, linking bodies to stones. It becomes, therefore, an essential element in the production of urban life and its temporal and spatial rhythms.

The acoustic regime of civic bell ringing constituted a crucial component of the regime's identity, its means of official communication, as well as its urban policies. By integrating the ringing of these civic bells into the existing religious soundscape, the regime attempted to ground its legitimacy over factional divides, construct a more unified urban community, and regulate the city's daily activities.

The typical Florentine day sounded something like this.[138] It began sometime around dawn, when three strikes of the bell of the Badia were followed by six strikes of the Leone in the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio, the city's largest communal bell.[139] Around the same time, the bell of the Podestà rang from the tower of the Bargello, which stood right next to the Badia, and was answered by the bell of the *popolo* (Palazzo Vecchio). Some time before the hour of terce,[140] which was rung by the Badia and by the cathedral for a duration of one half hour,[141] the first so-called *tocchus iuris* (strike of justice) was heard. This was a six-ring sequence rung by the Leone. The Montanina, meanwhile, was required to anticipate this sequence by sounding its own sequence before the first and last strikes of the justice bell, which opened the city's tribunals at the Bargello. After terce, the Toiana rang continuously, *a distesa*, for one hour.[142] Midday, likely somewhere between the hours of sext and nones, was also rung by the Badia, and the *sonatores* (the commune's trumpet players) played to announce that the city's executive council was about to eat lunch. After nones, which was rung from the Badia, and before vespers, the bell of Justice (the second *tocchus iuris* rung by the Leone) and the Montanina opened the afternoon session of the courts in the same way they did in the morning. The dinner of the priors was announced by trumpets toward evening, and soon afterward, the sound of the evening prayer of the Ave Maria was heard, rung by the Leone. Finally, as the sun descended, the bell of the Podestà, which had rung to begin the day, rang to end it. It was answered this time by the Leone, whose reciprocal triple sequence marked the cessation of daytime sounds as they were muffled by the silent regime of the night, where even the popular strains of love songs and the accompanying words of lovestruck youths were prohibited (figure 96).[143]

This was only the foundational sonic matrix that gave Florentine urban spaces, like any comparable city, their particularly dense cadences. This daily rhythm served to highlight the contrast between these and more infrequent events, such as the entrance of new priors into the Palazzo Vecchio every two months. On such occasions, all the bells of the commune were to ring solemnly *a martello*.[144] This ritual also signaled that the collective voice of the city's government belonged to the building, its tower, and the authority it symbolized. They gave voice to what was, essentially, a silent regime.[145]

Bells rang for every administrative body, both to gather its members together and to signal to the rest of the city the proper functioning of its deliberative political systems. Bells rang to assemble the advisory colleges of the Twelve Good Men and the Standard-Bearers of the militia companies, when the bell of the *popolo* rang one hundred times, or for about an hour,[146] but they also rang to communicate news and accompany important activities, such as the

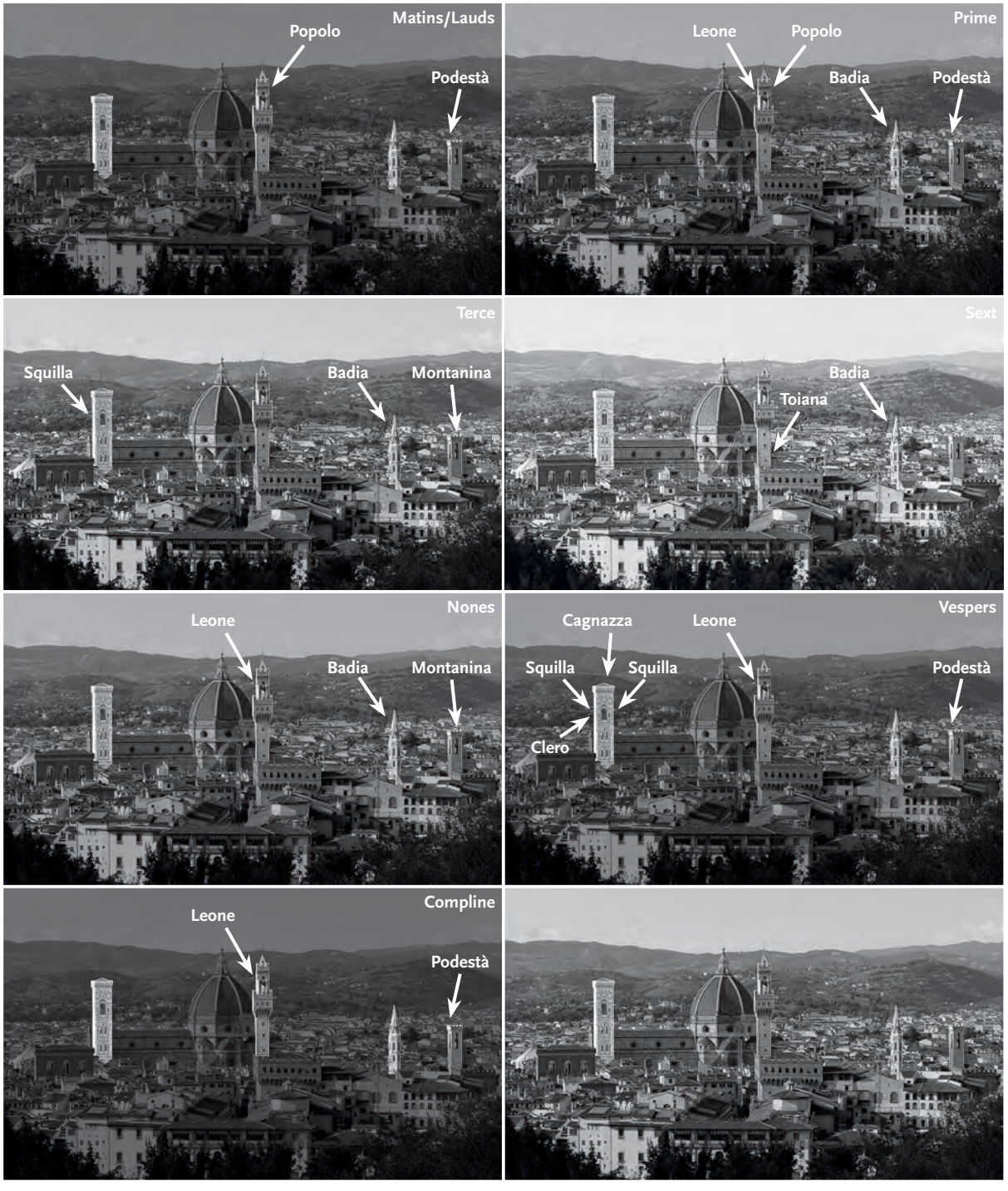


FIG. 96 A serial visualization of the daily acoustic dialogue between the city's principal bell towers, representing several key spatio-temporal exchanges. Photo by author.

FIG. 97 La Toiana, the bell that rang to announce the midday meal of the priors and now the clock bell in the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio (formerly the Palace of the Priors). Photo by author.

election and death of popes, preparations for war,[147] the inspection of communal security forces,[148] military victories,[149] insurrections,[150] homicides, violent crimes,[151] executions,[152] excommunications, fires,[153] parliaments,[154] the passing of laws, the announcement of victories,[155] treaties, rebels, news from abroad, or any time that the people were called both to arms and to celebration.[156] So much depended on the sounds that bells made that ringing them at the wrong time, for the wrong reasons, was grounds for severe punishment.[157]

After terce, the Toiana rang continuously for one hour (figure 97).[158] This expanded moment, known as the *ora del Toiano*, signaled mealtimes for merchants.[159] It was the commune's *sonatores* (with trumpet and pipes), however, who had to announce to the city that the priors themselves, cloistered in the Palazzo Vecchio, were dining in the palace. During their evening meal, those same musicians were also required to make their way through the city playing their instruments to announce it to outlying neighborhoods.[160]

This complex, interdependent acoustic system suggests that the daily regime was not characterized by an abstract succession of discrete sounds but by clusters of sonic exchanges that echoed across space. They were sequences that conversed with and for Florentines, marking certain times with an indelible acoustic imprint. While the sonatores were playing to announce the government's meal, the high Mass after terce, rung from both the Badia and the cathedral, was followed by the constant sound of the Toiana (figure 98), revealing that these clusters were also deliberate exchanges between the sacred and the secular.

Bells in Florence were emblematic of the way in which those two aspects of urban life were profoundly intertwined in action even as they were distinct in space. It is a commonplace that Florentine civic government was an urban configuration consciously isolated in space from the jurisdictional reach of the church. The two complexes stand at opposite ends of the original Roman grid system. However, they were reunited by a dialogue that dramatized that spatial divide by harmonizing the space between them throughout the day (see figure 47). Civic bells responded to but did not conflict with the ringing of sacred bells. Similarly, the city's sacred bells responded to civic events in their own hierarchical configurations. They emphasized this urban separation even as they bridged it. Conversely, there is evidence to suggest that the cathedral complex was conceived as public space, while the Palazzo Vecchio and the square that surrounded it were draped in a legislative aura of sacred prohibitions.[161] This interpenetration and distinction of sacred and civic spaces is crucial for understanding the fluid nature of these relationships.

The most immediate problem that arises in the creation of a topographic and temporal map of bells and their auditory jurisdictions is the sheer confusion

FIG. 98 Ora del Toiano: the acoustic topography of the transition from morning (terce) to the midday meal. Author's overlay of Google Earth. Map data © 2015 Google.

FIG. 99 The institutional topography of the Florentine soundscape. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

and fluidity of their names, their dates, their functions, and their messages. Such confusion would not seem likely with an object that was often inscribed with its casting date, its maker, its patron, and a dedication to a patron saint. But the fluid materiality of bells, their periodic recasting and removal, rendered their identity more as a series of sounds than as objects, through which the collective identities of a community could be distilled. Bells did not simply perform functions. They staged a conventional and repetitive set of sonic configurations that produced a complex chorus of meaningful urban moments, all of which were detached from any fixed relationship to the concrete object but whose significance was, paradoxically, invested in the bell itself.[162]

Between the Badia, the Bargello, the Palazzo Vecchio, and the cathedral, therefore, Florentines witnessed the interaction of allied but separate regimes of acoustic meaning (figure 99). This particular convergence of sounds thus opened up both civic *and* sacred moments in which the populace was united both politically and spiritually. They were reminded of daily injunctions, legal proscriptions, working hours, functioning markets, common mealtimes, moments of ritual import (prayers, transubstantiation), their civic loyalties and obligations (the legitimate regime

and their duty to defend it), as well as their spiritual friends and advocates (local saints). In this way, the entire range of sounds made by bells transformed the diurnal, weekly, monthly, seasonal, and annual progression of time into sonic landscapes full of expectations. Bells were both medium *and* message, facilitating exchange and controlling information flows. They were a technique of representation and part of the urban soundscape that provided a certain way of understanding the specificity of one's physical environment. They made architecture speak in a concrete way, and they filled urban space with the sound of its own identity. They guided civic action, regulated information, and warned, chastised, and comforted those that were listening. From the acoustic organization of the city laid out in its laws, where labor, prayer, and social interaction were harmonized by the integrated ringing of the city's bells, we are not at all far from the historical reconstruction of Amphion's ideal dream of Thebes. But what remains to be scrutinized is how these acoustic exchanges participated, in a specifically historical way, in the construction of social life, the creation of urban space, and the maintenance of the bond between architecture and society.

Sound, Space, and Meaning in Renaissance Florence

3.

The ringing of bells throughout the day, linking prayer to action, meals to masses, and work to salvation, demonstrates how both space and time were amalgams of the sacred and the secular. Meticulously choreographed, these sounds functioned as the acoustic analogues to the legislation that divided public from private spaces, that governed thresholds, but whose effect was to bind the two within a series of constantly overlapping, temporal borderlands. This created multiple zones that impinged upon each other so that there were no completely fixed spatial or temporal borders in a modern sense. However, the sound of bells helped to mediate these complexities by uniting different groups and creating certain places at certain times with specific spatial coordinates and physical characteristics. Their robust longevity was a product of their regular recurrences, their repetitiousness in a schedule, and a configuration announced, defined, accompanied, and circumscribed by the ringing of bells.

The Acoustic Construction of Urban Time

Legislation pertaining to the urban soundscape was a codification of what was already a series of developing and expanding customary practices and strategic initiatives. Such laws are the key to understanding how the Florentine church and civic government grounded their presence over the city by giving aural form to both important and quotidian events. The previous chapter traced the casting, placement,

movement, and emerging topography of bells along with the construction and transformation of towers as a network of acoustic multifunctional transmitters in late medieval Florence. Such a history is sonic, spatial, and architectural, and highlights the dynamic interconnectedness of urban experience in the premodern city. This chapter focuses on how the aural clusters of bell exchanges that emerge from the statutes created and mediated time and space while they bound Florentines intimately to physical and social phenomena of their city. These were the keynotes of the daily soundscape, urban dialogues that mediated the experience of urban life but also contained within them deeper categories of meaning that were central to the identity of the communities they addressed and helped to form and to which they gave sustenance.

At dawn, the Leone responded to the recitation of the Mass with a series of six strikes. The brief description gives no indication as to why it rang in this way, nor from where the Mass was sung. However, we know from other sources that the small bell of the Badia rang at daybreak for the holy office of prime, the first hour of day. This canonical hour of prayer would have followed the Mass, which, in turn, followed the offices that ended at dawn—matins and lauds—all of which together accompanied the coming of light. This was most likely the dawn Mass referred to in the statutes as celebrated *sotto voce* or *submissa voce*,[1] which the Palazzo Vecchio answered with six strikes (*tocchi*) of the Leone.[2] Around that time, the bell of the *podestà* rang from the Bargello and was immediately answered by the bell of the *popolo* from the Palace of the Priors. This latter exchange was referred to as the "day bell" (*campana del dì*) and signified the official arrival of daytime (figure 100).[3]

The sequence of the *campana del dì* characterizes the temporal journey of the day, insofar as the day was a function of the acoustic rhythms of the city. It also intimates the intensely local and profoundly malleable nature of time in early modern Europe. The diurnal cycle, between dawn and dusk, was based on the Roman division of the day into two phases of twelve hours. Time was heard rather than seen, marked by the liturgical offices that followed the standard division of the day into four periods. These were bracketed by the five New Testament indications of the time of day, the core of the canonical hours, or holy offices of Christian prayer, which corresponded to the main events of Christ's passion—the high priests at council in the early morning, the crucifixion at the third hour, the darkness that lasts from the sixth to the ninth, and the entombment at dusk.[4] Since the number of canonical hours remained constant, the time between them expanded and contracted with the seasons. These were known as the unequal hours, described by Dante, who contrasted them with the equal hours used by astrologers.[5] These built-in undulations of temporal periods were further adjusted by the gradual drift of the later hours of nones and vespers toward earlier times of the day.[6] This general shifting of time, along with local variations, demonstrates just how flexible and arbitrary time was, considering that it coexisted with a more regular astrological time. It would follow, by a certain logic, that both time and space were not simply marked by the sound of bells, but actually were produced by them.

When the day bell rang, therefore, Florentines awoke to a spatial colloquy of sounds that ushered in the new day, gradually, from the hushed sounds of a dawn Mass to the official announcement of its arrival. By responding to the Mass with six strikes of its largest bell, the civic regime echoed, or relayed, the way that church bells sent out the message of salvation to the entire city at the moment of its liturgical performance.

FIG. 100 The morning bell sequence that established the sound of the legal beginning of the Florentine day. Photo by author.

The government simultaneously acknowledged, incorporated, and superseded the religious marking of time by this exchange between the juridical and legislative centers of civic power, the Bargello and the Palazzo Vecchio. It was at this moment that the two government towers initiated a sustained communicative dialogue that spanned the entire day over which it assumed secular jurisdiction. They did this by following the example set by the Leone, by responding to each other in turn, by skillfully interspersing their aural exchanges into the spaces between the customary sounds of a preexisting ecclesiastical soundscape encircling the privileges granted to the cathedral and the Badia.[7] In other words, they initiated a syncopated rhythm that was consciously meant not to disrupt the acoustic cycle of the church. Instead, civic bells enhanced and built upon those markers so that Florentines heard the unity of church and state performing an integrated soundscape.

Such a strategy was a way of harnessing the power of bells to unite and assemble the citizen body, to eradicate differences, and to harmonize the conflicts between institutions and communities. This was in stark contrast to the conventional urban strategies of Florentine governments, where reorganizing the city spatially through new political jurisdictions, the demolition of defensive towers, the creation of the public thoroughfares, and the drafting of laws that excluded magnates from political offices were the leading edge of a much more antagonistic planning policy.[8] Instead, the soundscape developed by the Florentine government created a harmonic rhetoric of inclusiveness. It was a

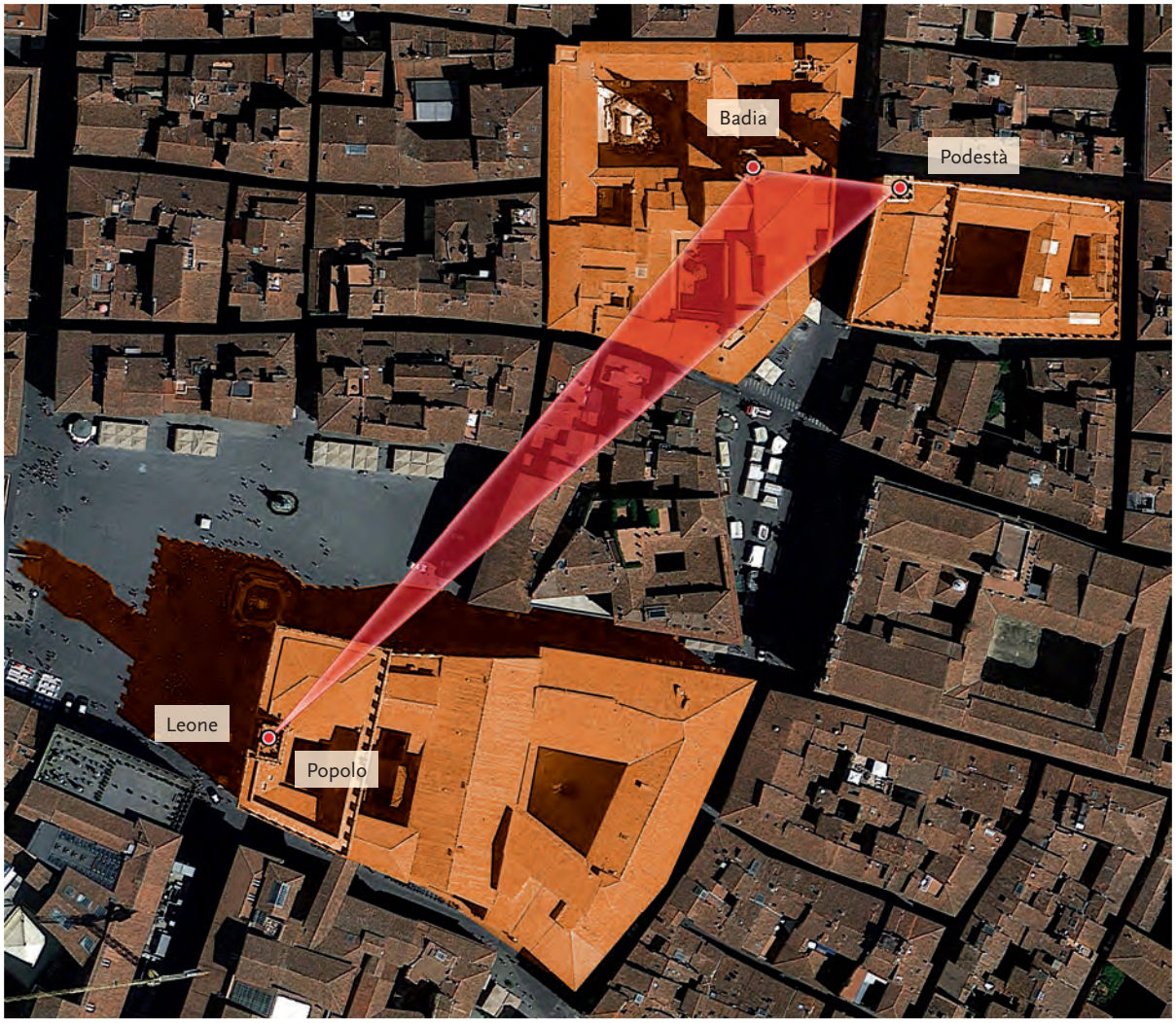


FIG. 101 The triangular dimensions of the acoustic dialogue between the three towers that marked the temporal journey of the Florentine day. Author's overlay of Google Earth. Map data © 2015 Google.

subtle, syncopated rhythm that respected the sacred marking of time and prayer, accompanying citizens as they woke, ate, worked, prayed, socialized, and went to sleep. It was precisely the relationships—temporal *and* spatial—between the Badia, the Palazzo Vecchio, and the Bargello that formed the network of this spatial dialogue that began the day (figure 101).

However, there was one divergence from this universalizing practice. For the mass of workers in the wool industry, who were subject to the Lana guild's statutes but were not members of that guild, the situation was reversed. The bells that governed their

FIG. 102 Map of Florence indicating the four general wool-production zones in the neighborhoods of San Pancrazio, Porta San Piero, San Piero Scheraggio, and the Oltrarno. Drawing by author.

labor fell under the jurisdiction and cost of the wool guild, disengaging them from the general communal-sacred soundscape. The guild maintained a bell in each of the four principal districts (*conventi*) where wool production was heavily concentrated: Oltrarno, San Pancrazio, San Piero Scheraggio, and Porta San Piero (figure 102), and it was this sound that created a secondary zone of labor time within the larger framework.[9] Wool workers were specifically punished for not arriving to work at the sound of these bells.[10] In these zones that surrounded and infiltrated Dante's chaste and sober center, these bells were part of an elaborate mechanism that circumscribed the urban experience of subjected workers, who, although they moved in the same physical space as their superiors, were relegated acoustically to a peripheral psycho-social space. An acoustic marginalization created a spatial one in which one kind of labor was subordinate to and surrounded by the more general aural topography that opened and closed workshops and markets. Such separate bells ringing for large-scale industrial work was not extraordinary, since large masses of

workers had to be organized together. This was also a feature of the Venetian soundscape, where separate rings distinguished the schedule of those laboring at the Arsenale shipyards from other forms of labor.[11] One of these separate Florentine work bells rang from the church of San Martino, in the center of the city, where a major concentration of wool production was located within the "convent" of Porta San Piero (figure 41).[12] The wool guild paid the church ten lire per year to ring the bell to signal the beginning and end of the workday for wool workers.[13]

Between the equal and unequal hours, daily and seasonal liturgical calendars, as well as the hierarchical division of distinct labor schedules, Florentines moved between simultaneously existing modalities of time marked by the sound of communicating bells. Even with the introduction of the mechanical clock, which pointed toward a future of an increasingly unified linear time, temporal markers were still primarily an audible encounter rather than a visible phenomenon, since, even when clocks received visible faces, they were heard in many more places than they could be seen.[14] This second temporal system makes references to time in historical sources, which referred to both numbered and canonical hours, more confusing.[15] Some of that confusion, however, is a result of our own modern preoccupation with precision. Time measured to the second and beyond tends to reduce the experience of the present to a single point that constantly flees from the horizons of the present toward those of the future. That present is constantly being devoured by the incessant and relentless flow that makes losing and wasting time necessary features of the anxiety built into it in our modern era. On the contrary, the time of the present rung by a series of bells from various towers represented a literal opening up of a "space of time." The break of day did not suddenly intrude upon the city only to be gone in an instant. Instead, it opened up a transitional zone permeated and circumscribed by a network of sounds emanating from the center of the city that accompanied the duration of certain activities, such as waking and crossing the city to work or returning home to eat and go to sleep. According to historian Christian Bec, time in the mercantile city of Florence was not considered a thing in and of itself, but was a function of gestures, an unfolding series of acts.[16] In fact, it was just such gestures, movements, and acts that linked space to time, so that one did something for a period of time in or across certain places. Civic time was produced by these gestures, which were themselves a response to the aural armature constructed by bells. As a result, time was an interactive relationship between sounds and acts. Whether they were verbal, mental, or bodily, these gestures established a certain rhythm for urban life. The soundscape mimicked the way darkness faded slowly into light; as prayers gave way to the sound of bells, sacred authority gave way to secular forces as the civic authorities took legal possession of the day.

In two famous essays on time and labor in the Middle Ages, Jacques Le Goff suggested that our modern notion of time as an abstract regularity governed by the precision of modern clocks supplanted the multiple simultaneous time zones of the medieval world. Although the "crisis" he identified, one that provoked a violent reaction against this emerging technology, has been countered by an understanding of a much more gradual development of the regime of modern timekeeping, the Florentine soundscape demonstrates how its time systems governed a range of overlapping temporal rhythms that also maintained the past as something lost, the present as something temporary, and the future as something not

guaranteed.[17] If the sound of bells opened up a space of time for prayers, meals, and sociability in the present, the silence that ensued between their ephemeral performances could also evoke a sense of cultural loss. With their absence, the expanded, deeply felt experience of a lingering present could disappear along with the communities they defined. In fact, Pucci himself, as prescient as ever, alluded to the way that bells not only maintained the past within their rings, but also reminded the present of its inexorable passing. The sound of the bells, by this very fact, allowed him to experience how each moment of the present—the evening, the night, and the morning—tumbled relentlessly into the past, leaving the heritage of all human capacities in ruins:

> Alas, that time, and the hours, and bells
> which every hour make me mindful of them
> with their sound
> remind me how often
> human powers go to ruin;
> and I think upon it, alas, evening, night, and
> morning
> as it [time] flees from each present moment.[18]

The inevitable wreckage of all things human by time was certainly a conventional cliché, but Pucci specifically links an emerging concept of a disappearing present to the vanishing sound of a bell. Through it he gives expression to a notion of how time was something that could be lost without the sounds that arrested it from relentlessly receding from the meridian of the present. Such sounds mediated understanding between oneself and the temporal dimensions within which one lived. As Corbin conceptualizes it, bell ringing constituted a now-broken system of experiencing time and space. It bore witness to a different relation to the world, in which reading the auditory environment involved the construction of identities between neighbors, institutions, the living and the dead, as well as future generations.[19] As a result, bells both produced time by the sounds they made, a time that disappeared into the silence that followed, only to be recalled into being by successive strikes. Time was as ephemeral, durable, proximate, and distant as the sounds that constituted its meaning and presence to the communities it set in motion.

Tocchus iuris—The Sound of Justice

As the largest and most politicized bell of the city, the Leone's role in ringing the *tocchus iuris*, or the ring of justice, had to express more than just official judicial activities. In the morning at half terce and in the evening after nones but before vespers, the Leone was rung in its guise as the bell of justice. At the same time, for both the morning and evening courts, the bell ringers in the Bargello had to anticipate this triple sequence, six strikes organized into three pairs of rings, with the Montanina, which had to ring a single sequence just before the first and last ring of the *tocchus iuris* (figure 103). The bells rang from the Podestà to the priors and back again in the sequence Montanina—Leone—Leone—Montanina—Leone. This spatial auditory exchange was the sound of the opening of the city's criminal and civil courts and the rendering of justice (*a rendere ragione*). Upon hearing it, all members of the podestà's judicial staff were required to descend into the courtyard, open the doors of the Bargello, and be available to citizens at the public benches by the end of the third sequence of rings.[20]

It is noteworthy that the sound of justice was also an exchange, but one dominated by the much louder

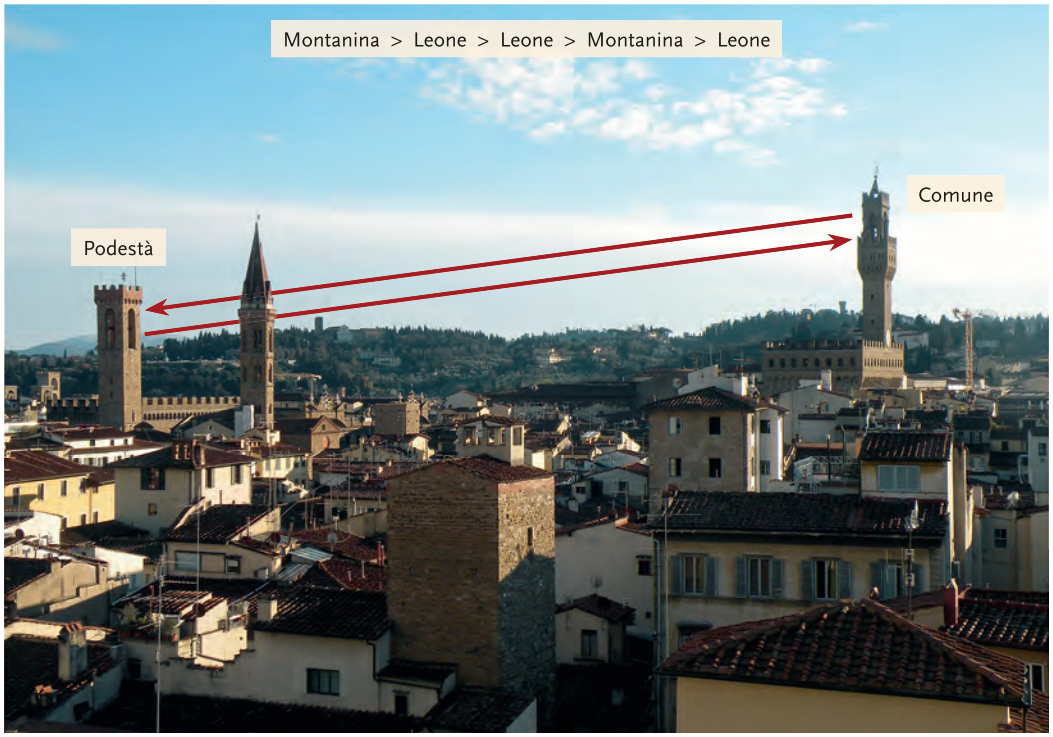


FIG. 103 *Tocchus iuris*: the ringing sequence of the sound of justice, heard twice daily in Florence. Photo by author.

sound and spatial range of the city's most important political bell. The message, therefore, was broadcast to the entire city not by the bell representing the courts but by a bell that also rang for insurrections, parliaments, and military victories.[21] This may have been partly due to the fact that the afternoon ring of the *tocchus iuris* also assembled the city's government officials to their offices, but this may have simply been added as a convenience. By ringing within the sonic purview of the larger Leone, the smaller Montanina at the Bargello relayed the sound of justice to the courts themselves. As a result, the two rings together created two simultaneous zones of justice, one within the other, one localized to where justice was actually practiced, and the other loud enough to broadcast a more general sound of justice to the entire territory in which Florentine law had legal force. It reminded those tribunals—foreigners who were hired, regulated, and evaluated by the commune—and the population at large that justice was an attribute of the city as a civic ideal, that it originated from and was guaranteed by the government that occupied the legislative palace.[22] Justice, one of the most fundamental concepts of the late medieval Italian commune, was produced and experienced simultaneously, therefore, as both practice and theory, expressed as sonic dialogue in two acoustic registers.

The idea of justice as a public good that was projected onto the public spaces of the city by the sound of a bell was well rooted in the popular psyche. It finds an early narrative corollary in the popular medieval compilation of stories known as the *Novellino*.

In novella 52, the crusader King John of Acre has a bell cast so that anyone who suffers injustice can ring it to assemble a group of wise judges.[23] For a long time, however, the bell remains silent, so much so that a vine takes root and clings to the decaying rope used to ring it. One day, a horse, which had nobly served its master until being carelessly abandoned in old age, begins to chew on the vine. At long last, the bell begins to sound, and upon hearing it, the judges assemble and immediately understand the horse's petition for justice. They order that the offending knight whom the horse had served when it was young should care for it now that it was old.

The bell of justice, therefore, acted as a kind of advocate on behalf of those who could not voice their injuries themselves. Its sound was the universal language of just retribution and was supposed to be accessible, theoretically, to anyone. This may have been why the *tocchus iuris* in Florence rang from the tower that symbolized the authority of the *popolo*, whose ideology presupposed a certain idea of universal public justice as one of the hallmarks of this class.[24] In addition to the practical effects of the commune's largest bell announcing the exercise of justice, it simultaneously created the spatial zone—the entire city and beyond—in which those judgments were applicable, while simultaneously defining a community to whom those judgments mattered. It was a sound that offered the official promise that the courts themselves were being watched, and that justice was, in the end, a virtue of Florence itself, which could respond to the bell's call. This is just what happened in 1287. When the powerful Corso Donati wanted to remove a condemned prisoner from the custody of the podestà's security staff, the bell was rung and the "good people of Florence" gathered en masse at the palace and began chanting, "Justice!" In doing so, they were responding to and amplifying the sound of the bell itself into a crescendo of popular strength, allowing justice—in this case decapitation—to proceed.[25] Rendering justice was thus the responsibility of citizens *and* judges, each of whom had to listen carefully to the sound of justice. This was necessary because justice could also lie dormant, an idea implicit in the *Novellino* story. Silence conspired with the wicked, while the noise of the crowd was the force from which the bell could draw strength in a cycle of mutual reinforcement. The Donati episode was a case in point. Justice was not only an ideal symbolized by a sound but also the practical potential of the bell to remind citizens to ensure that justice could and ought to be carried out. The story also assumes that, since it maintained the ability to ring the bell, the government was, by definition, a just institution making public (*piuvichare*) its official agenda.[26]

In light of this anxiety over the sound of justice giving voice to the plight of the voiceless, bells that acted as such mediators abounded as protagonists in popular literature. Consider, as an example, novella 202 of Sacchetti's *Il trecentonovelle*.[27] In this story, a wealthy man from Faenza replows the ditch at the edge of his property every year. However, each time he does so, he displaces the ditch, so that it co-opts, little by little, the land of his poorer neighbor, until the ditch is nearly up against the poor man's cherry tree. This creates a problem for the rich man because everyone knew that the cherry tree was located squarely on the poor man's property. However, the poor man has a much more serious problem. He cannot, by social custom, directly confront or talk back to someone so powerful. So he takes inspiration from the obstinate cherry tree that exposes his neighbor's underhandedness and devises a cunning plan. He scrapes together two florins and goes to all of the churches of Faenza,

begging and paying officials to ring their bells at a certain hour. The churches ring their bells so vigorously that the city's inhabitants wander about in confusion, desperately asking what these sounds could mean. Meanwhile, the poor man dashes about the city in a frenzy, and when anyone asks him for what the bells are tolling, he responds, "for the spirit of justice [*ragione*], which is dead" or "because reason [*ragione*] is dead."[28]

This aural exchange allows him to give voice to the injustice that is being perpetrated on him. The sound of bells initiates a dialogue with the citizens, who remain, in the end, utterly confused by the bells and the man's puzzling response. The story's narrator is explicit in stating how this phrase announcing the death of reason and justice is dispersed throughout the entire city by the bell, which acts as a surrogate of the voiceless peasant—"and so with the sound of the bells he cast this message throughout the city."[29] As a consequence, the lord of the city sets out to discover the cause of this extraordinary ringing. Hearing only stories about a crazed man racing through the streets yelling that justice and reason are dead, he summons him and listens to his story. Understanding the crime, he orders that the poor man's land be restored and that he be given as much of the rich man's land as the latter had tried to take away with his wayward plow, as well as the two florins he had paid to have the bells rung in his defense.

In this narrative, an economically marginal figure who has no effective or official political voice finds one in the sonic semantics of bells, which always held the promise of calling for justice. However, he also understands the capacity of bells to toll for death and joins these two functions together into a powerful ironic signal through which he can make his concerns audible. There is an aspect of the acoustic dimensions of the death and life of justice that might escape the modern reader. The narrator ends the tale by stating that just as the bells *were ringing* (*sonavano*) for the death of reason and justice, one could also say that they *rang* (*sonorono*) to resuscitate justice, while today they *could well sound* (*potrebbono ben sonare*) that it had indeed been brought back to life.[30] In this passage, there is a gradual shift in the mood and tense of the verb *sonare* (modern Italian *suonare*) from the imperfect indicative to the simple past and finally to the present conditional, a progression leading from death to a potential reawakening of justice and the actual rebirth of justice itself by the capacity of bells to create and maintain a complex series of successive significations over time. In effect, the narrator gives the verbal equivalent of an acoustic sequence that would have, literally, performed the resuscitation of justice.

For a contemporary reader, these last phrases could evoke the fluid and powerful nature of the sound of bells. What would have begun as the slow death toll (*a stormo, martello*) of all the church's bells gradually transforms into a sound that revives the memory of justice, and climaxes with the joyful pealing of a fully resurrected civic justice (*a distesa*). Each of these phrases would have evoked a mental acoustic crescendo in the mind of the reader, dramatizing the rebirth and linking it to the sound of the city's church bells ringing for the resurrection of Christ on Holy Saturday. What is important is that only a bell could properly make both messages real and present, since it was the voice of a bell that spoke to death on behalf of the city, and that also united it in celebration. For the poor man, this was the most direct and effective way to redress the wrongs committed against him. He only needed to link his own justice to the bell in order for his grievances to be understood.

Narratives like these often rewrite, critique, or interrogate events and issues that Florentines were constantly grappling with in their pursuit of constructing a city that reflected and facilitated their collective ideals. And one finds that these narratives are often inextricably bound up with the physical experience of the city and its architecture. Through the ringing of bells, the city spoke on behalf of those too weak to speak for themselves. However, Sacchetti's story was written just two decades after he had witnessed his own city's textile workers ringing numerous church bells around Florence to begin an uprising that ultimately led to the fall of the city's ruling regime. Therefore, his meditation on the poor man's ability to unleash the sound of justice was not merely fanciful. Justice for those marginalized by the city's political institutions was a hotly contested subject in Florence. Sacchetti himself would have been aware of these debates since he was intimately involved with the regime that followed this uprising. This rewriting of the narrative critically explores the responsibility of the government, whose neglect could lead to the sound of justice reconfigured as a violent call to arms.

The topical nature of such novellas in the historical context in which they circulated is further underlined by the fact that the story of the poor man of Faenza follows immediately upon one in which Sacchetti explores a similar theme of justice, imagined in terms of gender rather than class. In this story, novella 201, the streets are noisy and unpredictable places, especially for women, who are stranded in them like lambs among wolves. In the many chaotic spaces described in the *Trecentonovelle*, ordinary lines of communication are highly unstable and often difficult to control, but there are ways in which characters can manipulate urban semiotic systems. Bells offer the most accessible form of intervention for those who need to send a message through urban space. They represent the medium through which the powerful and voiceless can confront each other in a dialogue of wills and through which certain truths can be exposed.

In this story, Madonna Cecchina, the widow of a relatively wealthy merchant, has nearly all her possessions gradually wrested from her by the most powerful men of Modena. She has no recourse to the law, since these men control the city by force and not by right ("la forza pascea il prato").[31] However, she, too, has a cunning plan by which she can appropriate both the visual and auditory language of the street in order for her case to finally be heard. She organizes a procession in which a friend holds a fish inside the mouth of a larger one while her son repeatedly strikes a portable bell as they move through the streets. As this mock procession of relics wends its way through the city, to anyone who asks what it means, Cecchina answers simply, "It is the big fish that eat the little ones."[32] This composition of fish, accompanied by a single utterance and the regular rhythm of a bell, creates a kind of mobile living exemplum, a moral anecdote encoded in words, sound, and image, that has to be interpreted by those who witness it. Madonna Cecchina is caught within the open space of the city, which presents its own particular mechanism of spatial constrictions, and this forces her to appropriate a conventional representational form such as the exempla and processions so common in medieval and Renaissance culture. Urban audiences would have been familiar with such moral anecdotes from their use in public preaching. However, as in the case of the poor man ringing the bells of Faenza for the death of justice, the message is at first confusing to its audience since these sounds are clearly outside of the regular acoustic rhythms of the city. In the Faenza story, however,

a prudent ruler searched for the reasons behind the noise. Madonna Cecchina is not so fortunate. Even though she has combined the forces of a voice, a bell, and a visual exemplum, no one can read it or interpret its message, so the three participants in the procession have no alternative but to return home and simply eat the fish themselves. The narrator ends the tale by stating that he believes that the lords of the city, the Pigli, actually refused to interpret the message. The reader learns that those who allow widows and children to be robbed will soon lose their power, just as these lords of Modena did shortly after, to a much bigger fish whose name was Gonzaga.

All of these associations meant that when Florentines heard the *tocchus iuris* ring from the Palazzo Vecchio, it was not simply a sound that signaled the opening of the courts at the Bargello. It was a command that justice be done there, a will toward a more ideal form of justice to which the bell appealed on behalf of the *popolo* and the regime that wanted to represent them. It was a signal that the *popolo* was watching and that the *podestà*, who had to ring the Montanina in anticipation, was subjecting himself to this will. Together, the exchange of bells staged the relationship between two governmental bodies in terms of their relationship to the idea and the mechanism of justice. Justice had a sound that governed all of Florentine territory, reminding Florentines that the space within which its courts had jurisdiction was wedded to the sonic reach of bells.

La Squilla da Lontano: The Evening Bell

Attached to the ringing of compline, which followed closely after vespers, the Leone again sounded, this time for the recitation of the Ave Maria, beginning the city's descent into darkness.[33] Nowhere was this message more intensely felt than in the series of sounds that the Leone initiated toward the end of the day, known generally as the evening bell and arguably the most important daily sound in premodern Europe. This acoustic configuration was as universal in its general form—the repeated triple sequences—as it was local in its infinite variations.[34] The evening bell in Italian cities was often associated with the different kinds of activities and communities that it governed, and had many names: the *campana dei custodi* or *della guardia* because it called the night watch to duty; the *campana dei ladroni* (thieves), referring to night's association with crime; the *campana della doppia pena*, for the imposition of double fines for crimes committed after it rung; the *campana dei tavernai*, for the closing of taverns.[35] It signaled the coming of darkness and accompanied preparations for its arrival. The silence that followed the last strike of the sequence demarcated the threshold of proscriptions and prohibitions, evoking the threatening space of the night as the time of conspiracy and crime. However, this complex and gradual descent into darkness was not exclusively experienced as the ominous sound of a fearful night and the restricted liberty of individuals.[36] The evening bell had much more resonance than just disciplining the social body.

Notably, it was a secular, communal bell that rang the Ave Maria in Florence. It unified Florentines into a sanctified zone by choreographing a city in prayer, binding individual spiritual salvation to civic transcendence. The message of the acoustic regime was one of harmony and unity between bodies in space, whose movements were the building blocks of an urban ideal of social peace. At times of crisis, such as the reappropriation of the Ave Maria for civic purposes during the siege of 1529, the government of Florence ordered

that all those not fit to fight should stop, kneel, and pray for the beleaguered Florentine forces.[37]

Although the evocation of the Ave Maria was often synonymous with the evening bell, the language of the Florentine statutes suggests that these ring sequences were separate, successive moments.[38] The problem of identifying the evening bell in specific urban contexts and its association with the evening prayer of the Ave Maria, the nighttime double fine, and the curfew arises from the fact that all these announcements could either be gathered into the ring of a single bell or rung in a particular sequence. Florentine statutes never refer to an evening bell per se, the way they do to the day bell (*campana del dì*). Instead, they describe a series of moments in which certain things occurred in a gradual transition from light to darkness. It was an interactive acoustic performance across time and space that choreographed a set of activities and prepared the city for the passage from one day to the next. Already taken for granted by the early thirteenth century, it combined promises of salvation, security, and order.[39] It guided the city toward darkness by sounding the cessation of labor, the evening meal, a collective prayer, the closing of the gates, the clearing of public spaces, and the separate legal regime of the night.[40] It also opened up a space for specific kinds of neighborhood sociability.

The temporal duration of the evening bell reveals just how intimately sound and space were integrated within the urban environment through its tripartite structure. The statutes of the town of Chieri, near Turin, are the most explicit on this point. The three rings of the evening bell were supposed to be separated by intervals long enough that persons of high standing could dine at their leisure during the first, and any man or woman could traverse the city from any one place to another without haste during the second.[41] What this description makes explicit is what was implicit, customary, widely assumed, and expected of every evening bell in whatever city it rang. It was supposed to guide and accompany rituals and movement and give structure and meaning to the most basic social relations by opening up a transitional space that choreographed bodies in space. It was a suspended moment, an expanded field, in which inhabitants engaged in various acts of urban sociability.

For a range of social classes, there must have been a number of choices about what to do in the evening. For example, innkeepers placed benches in the Mercato Vecchio on Thursday evenings. Taverns were places that generated a great deal of statutory unease about the behavior they could promote, and often the evening bell was linked to their closing.[42] Such gatherings outside in the piazza, however, appear to have been much more actively condoned. This sociability was linked, spatially and concretely, to sitting down, in public, on temporary or permanent benches. In the background of one of Domenico Ghirlandaio's Sassetti Chapel frescoes, figures appear in casual exchanges on the benches that surrounded the Piazza della Signoria (figure 104).[43] Benches were at the core of Florentine urban dialogues, since they were crucial elements in governmental debates, political spectacles, social rituals such as marriages and funerals, outdoor feasts, and professional storytelling and singing.[44] Florentines would gather in the city's various squares to tell each other stories, listen to professional singers, make fun of them, sing songs to the Virgin, listen to preachers, or meet with neighbors.[45] Such activities transformed the squares from centers of commerce, trade, political, or religious ritual into much more intimate living spaces. At a time when it was neither day nor night, the meaning of these spaces changed from moment to moment.

FIG. 104 Tourists resting on the remaining fourteenth-century benches that were built into the façade of the loggia. As Yvonne Elet has shown, such benches were planned and partially executed for the entire perimeter of the Piazza della Signoria and represented an external version of the benches of government inside the palace. Photo by author.

Struck and recited three times in unison, the Ave Maria was followed by the Podestà with its own triple sequence announcing the time of double fines for any crimes committed.[46] This was answered by the Leone's final triple sequence, which ushered in the night (figure 105).[47] It repeated the spatial choreography of the morning, with bells ringing in dialogue from the Badia to the Palazzo Vecchio, the Bargello, and back to the Palazzo Vecchio. But instead of announcing a Mass, it accompanied a mass prayer, a threefold utterance, recited privately but simultaneously, with each sound of the bell guaranteeing the ten-day indulgence.[48] Opening up a space of time for specific tasks and journeys through the city, such sequences gave a temporal and spatial complexity to the beginning and the end of the day, enfolding the city in the comfort of prayer in the face of the threatening space of the night, guaranteeing that the city's institutional order was functionally intact.[49]

Dante describes the evening bell in the *Purgatorio* as the "distant ring" (*squilla da lontano*) that produced a powerful affective response from the traveler: "It was now the hour that turns back the longing of seafaring folk and melts their heart the day they have bidden sweet friends farewell, and that pierces the new pilgrim with love if he hears from afar a bell that seems to mourn the dying day."[50]

For the traveler the evening bell turned a strange place into a familiar territory of salutary promise and mitigated the longing for a distant home.[51] For Dante, bells not only had the power to reconstruct territories from the past, they could also transport those territories across space and extend the symbolic protective power to of one's native city, a notable phenomenon

FIG. 105 The evening bell sequence that brought the Florentine night into being. Photo by author.

for a writer in exile. The sound of the evening bell, therefore, traveled widely in the Christian imagination, relaying from tower to tower across the landscape, accompanying both the peasant in the fields and the traveler on the road.[52] It ranged beyond the urban milieu in which it was born and carried its comforting message to those who found themselves in transit on the margins.

The final sonic exchange between the Podestà and the Leone made the transition from holy rite to legal prohibitions, always associating the regime's authority over the streets with its dialogue with voices in the street, an exchange that sought collective redemption. Similar to the way that the baptistery was a concrete symbol of Florentine religious and civic identity, the soundscape participated in the maintenance of souls and the creation of citizens, subject to law and church. The final acoustic exchange of the day also created an aural bond between the two centers of government, the legislative and the judicial. This partnership was at the heart of the dialogue of bells, but it also served a more practical purpose. It confirmed that these institutions were functioning properly, that civic authority was intact, that the spaces of the city were effectively under its surveillance and control as darkness fell. A gap in the sequence, of course, and the whole acoustic constellation could fall apart, indicating to the city a breakdown of the political order by a breakdown in its acoustic order.[53]

This profoundly integrated acoustic exchange remains embedded in the statutes used to describe the pattern. In language far removed from any semblance

of literary rhetoric, they transcribe something heard into something read, where the syntax performs an evocative, if simple, linguistic condensation. It dramatizes the close interlacing of ringing sequences, so much so that were it not for several more prosaic repetitions elsewhere, the grammatical interlacing of bell sounds would be almost impossible to completely disentangle from each other, which, in practice, was precisely the point. The wording goes something like this: "And in the evening the Ave Maria is rung with the bell of the Lion, and also the third ring, having first rung at the third ring of the bell of the Podestà."[54] It is difficult to imagine where the third rings of either bell rhythmically fall with respect to the other, except to say that they almost overlap textually, wherein the description attempts to echo their interlaced rhythms.[55] It follows the choreography it sets out, moving back and forth between bells and towers in the daily rhythm that framed the city's opening and closing hours. It is precisely the fact that bells were part of a communicative network, and not simply isolated sounds, that is staged in the very description of their ringing patterns. The vernacular version of 1355, translated with a keen sense of contemporary literary culture, is just as allusive, and therefore just as confusing.[56]

During the day, penalties for crimes committed in certain spaces—markets, courts, bridges—were already doubled, but under the cover of darkness these individual topographies were gathered up and blended into a single zone.[57] Night brought with it a particular psychological identity that criminalized certain activities and was assumed to promote others. It was the time of secrets and was therefore surrounded by rules and regulations specific to it. Carrying a lamp was obligatory for anyone out at night,[58] gatherings were forbidden, and certain activities were singled out for prohibition or specific permission.[59] There was also a certain anxiety about the unofficial noises associated with the night. In the early decades of the Florentine republic, the law officially prohibited young men from going through the city in the dark singing love songs to their beloveds, with or without instruments.[60] However, the mention of love disappears in the language of the 1355 statutes, which refer only to the playing of various instruments and professional singers (*cantatori*) who make music dishonorably (*disonestamente*).[61]

The tradition of the *mattinata*, the rowdy musical satirical barbs (charivari, rough music) aimed at older would-be spouses, was a celebration of youthful love. It was a deeply ingrained and obligatory custom in communal Italian culture of the late Middle Ages: "singing was obligatory to courtship and the tone-deaf lover hired a professional."[62] The honorable pursuit of love may have been increasingly tolerated at night, but such noise was regularly banned in communal statutes. What the authorities feared was the violence that always threatened to break out in such moments of strident satire and "shameful" songs. The *mattinata* was a public display based on love that honored young women or beautiful couples and satirized socially transgressive forms of love.[63] Its various celebrations brought large numbers of people together and institutionalized joyous laughter, celebratory bouts of drinking, and ironic festive spectacles.[64] Victims had to take it goodheartedly, in the spirit of carnival. However, such ritual behavior constantly broke the line between satirical adulation and cruel derision. Laws against it seemed to acknowledge its ambivalent duality between honor and insult, nuancing the prohibitions by adjusting fines for words uttered in certain spaces: "in front of one's own house, in church, or in the municipal council," or at certain times: at "a funeral,

a wedding, or a baptism . . . or if the uproar took place at night."[65] Dissonant music, insults, and general noise were ritually performed at the doorways of newlyweds, a practice increasingly proscribed by law.[66] However ineffectively, the government was constantly trying to regulate architectural thresholds, which had to maintain proper social interaction between the various zones, public and domestic, of the city.

There was a particular kind of silence, on the other hand, that took advantage of the darkness to fend off the evil that might be carried out at night. Unexpected sounds or silences struck fear and anxiety in the hearts and minds of Florentines, who immediately perceived the creation of menacing spaces. It was obvious that, just as people used sound and memory to navigate the familiar spaces of their domestic interiors at night,[67] Florentines used the sound of bells to navigate through the darkened city, sometimes in ways that were threatening to those in power. In 1387, for example, a newly elected executive council entered the palace in silence amid a climate of political fear, prohibiting the bells from sounding the hours until daylight. As the anonymous author of a contemporary diary noted, this was part of an attempt to prevent the city from rising in revolt. The following night a fire broke out in a shop under the Badia, and a rumor quickly spread that it was deliberately set in order to force the fire bells to ring so that armed groups could coordinate a planned insurrection. Upon hearing this rumor, the priors forbade both the Badia and Sant'Apollinare, the two churches closest to the fire, to sound the alarm.[68] In the uncertain realm of the night, what was clearly the reaffirming sound of authority during the day was transformed into the sound of an imagined political conspiracy in the borderless confusion of the night. In a similarly uncertain atmosphere, the authorities likely wanted to enhance such confusion in March 1382, when the sounding of the hours was suppressed both day and night from Friday to Sunday to deny conspirators the acoustic mechanism they needed to coordinate large movements of men.[69]

Such official anxiety may have stemmed from the night being, as sociologist Georg Simmel described it, determinative of a different spatial sense. As it closed in on the individual, space almost disappeared, and consequently so did boundaries. This fantasy expanded the darkness into the space of exaggerated possibilities.[70] All the meticulously laid-out zones of daytime, all the careful divisions between the public and the private, would begin to dissolve, opening up a zone of potential transgression and mischief. But bells helped mitigate the treacherous journeys of the night, ringing so that sailors could avoid dangerous reefs near the shore, alerting travelers to the existence of hospitals, and driving malignant supernatural forces away.[71]

In Florence, the day ended with the collective murmur of the evening prayer and the anxieties anticipating the coming of darkness, where bells marked thresholds and sought to guarantee social order. This dialogue enveloped the day with an auditory beginning and end. Bells rang in successive patterns, some following on the heels of others, some anticipating the ringing of others, and all of them deriving meaning from their position, tone, and rhythm along a syntactic chain of daily events as church and state gave audible form to their individual authority and their collective integration.

The Acoustic Construction of Urban Space

Chapter 1 introduced Schmarsow's interpretation of architecture as the "creatress" of space in order to emphasize, in art-historical terms, that the viewer

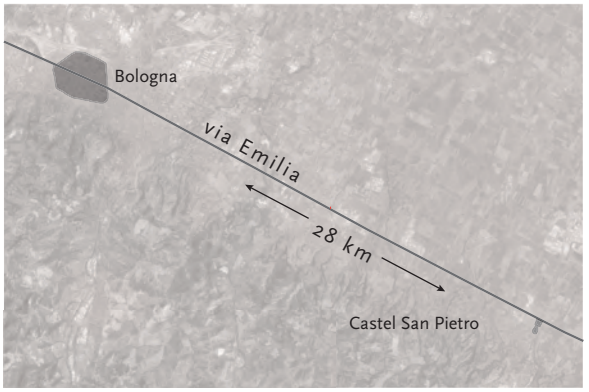
brings that space into being by moving through it, by perceiving it as a bodily extension into space.[72] This relationship between architecture and the body, a relationship constantly reconceptualized in architectural theory, becomes historically meaningful when such bodies encounter the built environment in religious, political, or social contexts. This spatial dynamic becomes even more complex within the aural context, when bells sound to create temporary zones and reinforce already existing ones. One only need point to the intense attachment to local neighborhoods by residents who defined themselves by the sound of the bell and the sight of a campanile that dominated their territory, which is embedded in the Italian concept of *campanilismo*.[73] In times past, the range of the parish bell also defined one's social identity by creating the limits of one's local world. Each time it rang, one knew that one was at home, in a familiar civic territory made sacred by the sound of a church bell. Such limits were felt more strongly than the abstract borders between jurisdictions. The division of Florence in the mid-fourteenth-century reforms into sixteen administrative wards (*gonfaloni*) that were not coincident with parish boundaries could have been part of a larger strategy of diminishing the older forms of neighborhood identification and reorganizing people into more precisely defined spatial units oriented toward the commune's distribution of political offices and collection of taxes. Fixing definite borders to political territories that possessed distinguishing flags but not bells would have countered the more fluid and self-selecting topographies of parishes, which each had their own bells. *Gonfaloni*, on the other hand, were connected solely to bells ringing from the central communal towers.[74]

Coordinating a territory to the sound of a bell was, therefore, critical. Church bells created a temporary sacred zone that amplified the sound of the Mass. Alarm bells for fires functioned in relay to locate danger and alert the whole city at the same time. The Leone, the commune's largest bell, had to be loud enough to be heard by all Florentines because sonic reach signified the legal threshold of the city's authority. As an example of how this played out in purely practical terms, consider the legal opinion arrived at by Albericus de Rosate, a fourteenth-century jurist, in a case involving Padua's practice of doubling fines for crimes committed at night.[75] In his opinion to the Paduan authorities, he referred to a similar case that had been heard in Bologna. In that context, an argument was made by the Bolognese authorities that, even though the people in the dependent fortress of San Pietro could not hear the evening bell, due to the distance from where it rang, they should still be punished by the double fine (figures 106, 107). Albericus, however, argued the contrary position. He noted that the sound that separated the day from the night, that is, the evening bell ("campanae deputatae ad segregandum diem, a nocte"), which was common to all cities ("sicut communiter est in omnibus civitatibus"), and therefore signaled the double penalty for crimes committed, was the moment after the third sounding of that bell ("post tertium sonum campanae"). Recognizing, therefore, that the end of the day was determined in an arbitrary way by the sounding of the bell, he maintained that the law was only valid in the places where that bell was actually heard, and not beyond. This should be the case, he argued, because it was only day in the places where the sun reached the earth and not in any other. Therefore, even when it was night in one place, the sun was shining in another.[76]

Albericus's argument is remarkable in the way that he interpreted common practices to demonstrate that time and space were not absolute categories but

relative, malleable entities, linked to, but independent of, the natural cycle of light and darkness and measured by the ringing sequences of bells. This was the case because sound penetrated space, wantonly annihilating architectural thresholds and any pretence they had to concrete permanence. Space, as a legal entity, came into being only insofar as it was experienced as an acoustic territory. Albericus understood how sound, on the urban scale, was the local mediator between the experience of time and space. Sound determined the spatial limits of legislation while it also set the temporal margins of those very same spaces. The natural day was only a useful reference, not a universal or official marker of time. If you did not hear the bell, it was not night where you were, you did not belong to the community it brought into being, nor were you subject to its laws or its legal protection. For inhabitants in a city like Florence, the harmonic construction of the city's protective walls by the sweet sound of Amphion's lyre did not have to be understood metaphorically as a remote and fantastic origin myth, because Florentines experienced the sonic creation and maintenance of civic space literally, every day, from morning to evening, across the entire expanse of the city.

The implications of Albericus's legal argument placed the sound of the evening bell as the mediator between government and governed. It was the reminder and seal of a pact that linked them both within a series of rights and obligations. Such obligations were acoustically defined within a succession of fluid spatial territories and itineraries. They marked the presence of transitional auditory zones that accompanied and guided urban dwellers. The town of Chieri, mentioned above, was only the most explicit example, while in Pisa taverns had to be closed by the second ring of the evening bell in order for drinkers



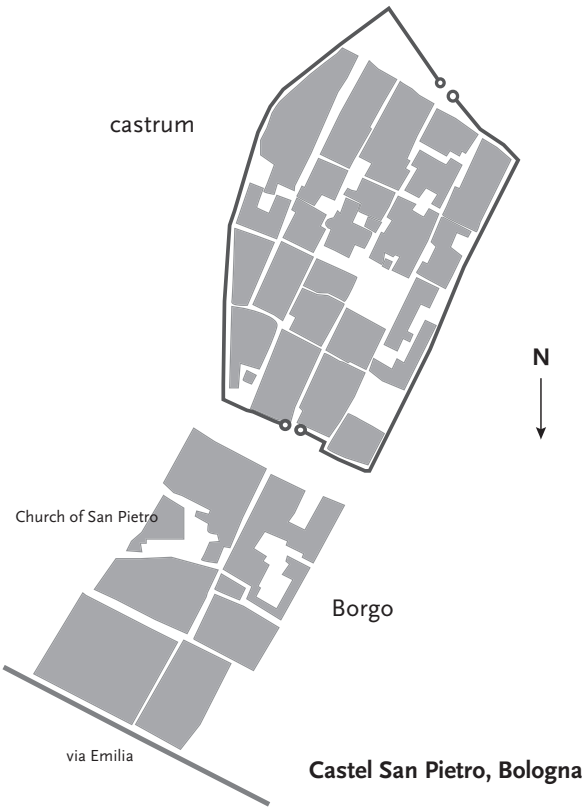


FIG. 106 From Bologna to San Pietro along the via Emilia, showing the location of the Bolognese fortress. Drawing by author.

FIG. 107 A map of Bologna's Castrum Sancti Petri, where the population of the *castrum* could not hear the bell ringing from the Borgo. According to the opinion of the fourteenth-century jurist Alberico de Rosate, this meant that they were not subject to punishments augmented for infractions committed at night. Plan by author.

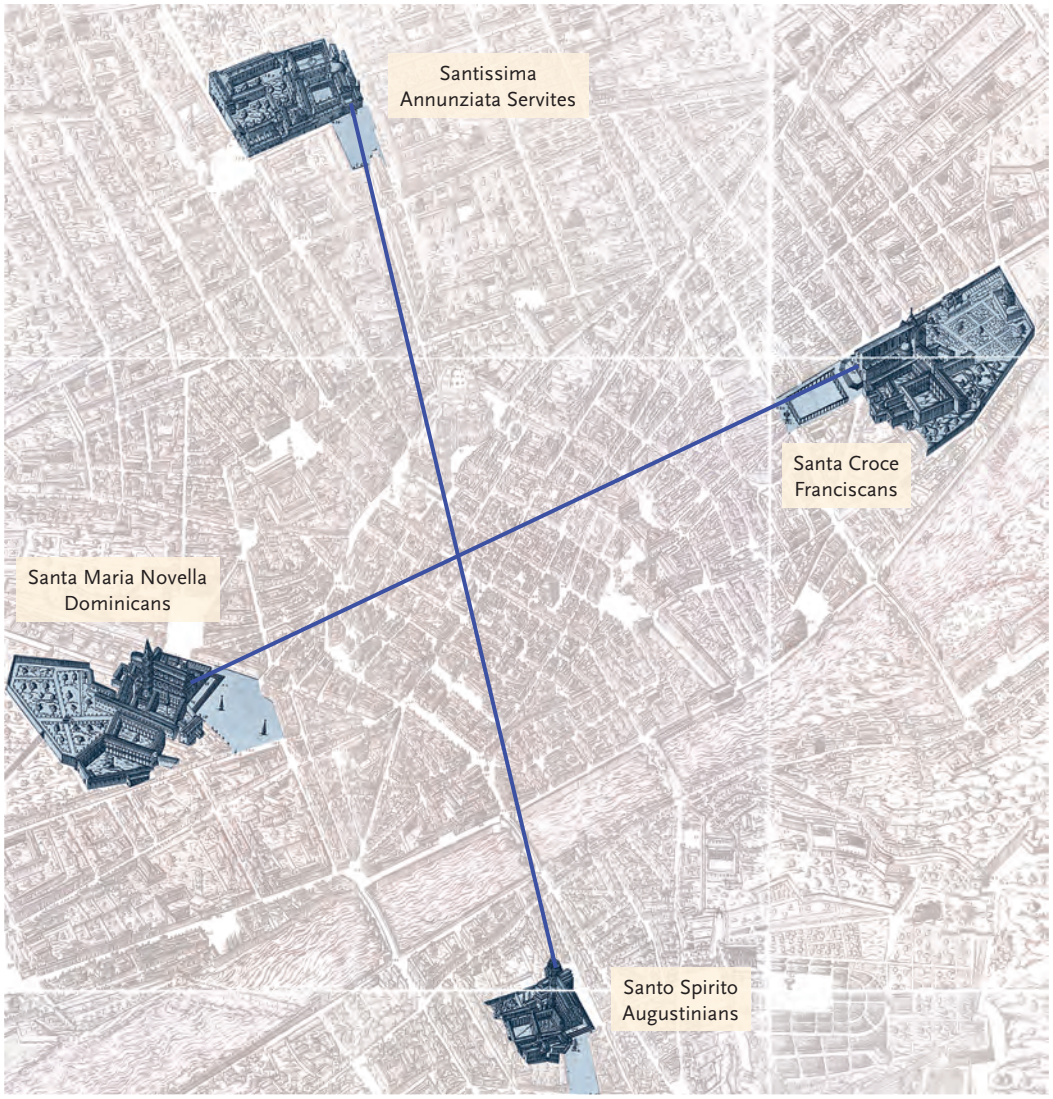


FIG. 108 Axes of major mendicant orders in Florence distributed throughout the four *quartieri*. These axes cross each other just northeast of the city's geographical center at the Mercato Vecchio, on both the sixteenth-century map and in real topography. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

to be home by the third. In Bologna, the morning bell had to sound for as long as it took a person to exit the city gates and travel a distance of one mile.[77]

The legal dimensions that surrounded the way bells created spatial zones are latent within the conflicts over the right not only to ring a bell but to cast one in the first place. Battles over the size of both towers and bells were directly related to their ability to govern space. The right to have a bell, particularly a large one, meant that one had the capacity to bring people together. This was something that the commune jealously guarded, seeking to prevent the kind of rivalries that broke out between religious institutions continually vying for a position within the aural

landscape. For example, the bells of the mendicants, convents, and hospitals, as Trexler has shown, had been drawing people away from parish churches, which led to subsequent losses in revenue (figure 108). As a result, new institutions within certain parishes were caught up in legal challenges through which parishes jealously sought to protect their rights.[78] This was precisely the kind of acoustic instability that the regime sought endlessly to avoid, consistently claiming that the sounds it made superseded the continually disputed localized borders created by neighborhood-based bells.

Such a situation arose in 1424 with the convent of Le Murate. As a relative newcomer to the spiritual landscape, Le Murate's prestige and influence was increasingly worrying to the nuns of Sant'Ambrogio, who sought to protect their parochial jurisdiction. The results of the legal battle permitted the nuns of Le Murate to cast only a small bell (*campanetta*) for their campanile, not exceeding one hundred pounds (figures 109, 110).[79] The nuns of Sant'Ambrogio exhibited the same resolve to steadfastly maintain their stewardship of their acoustic terrain in a dispute with a certain Fra Giuliano. For an oratory he was constructing next to their properties between the Porta alla Croce and the Porta alla Giustizia, he received the right to build a small bell tower (*campaniletto*) with a small bell that cost no more than eighty florins, which greatly limited its size and subsequent sonic range (figure 110). A contract drawn up by the notary Paolo d'Amerigo di Bartolo Grassi locked Giuliano into a set of severe restrictions. He was not allowed to celebrate masses, observe the canonical hours, or administer sacraments—all events for which bell ringing was customary—without the express permission of the abbess.[80] Breaching this agreement would give Sant'Ambrogio the right to destroy both the oratory and the bell tower. Across the river, in 1396, a neighborhood dispute arose between the collegiate church of San Frediano and the Carmelites of Santa Maria del Carmine (figure 111). In a legal suit brought against the Carmelites, the prior of San Frediano attempted, but ultimately failed, to prevent them from building a campanile to ring their own bells just a short distance away.[81]

FIG. 109 The bell tower of Sant'Ambrogio, an important parish church occupied by Benedictine nuns that represented a large working-class population of Florentines, many of whom worked in the wool trade. Photo by author.

The right to prevent construction or demand destruction of architectural property was part of a

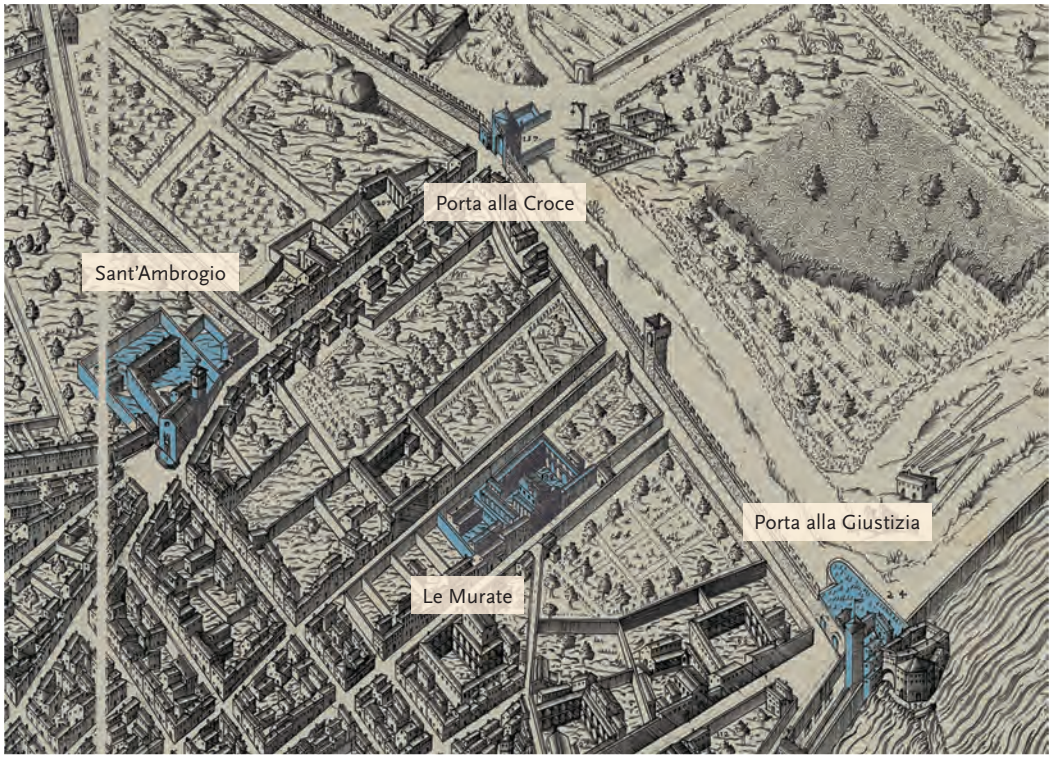


FIG. 110 Protecting acoustic space: the proximity of the nuns of Sant'Ambrogio and those of Le Murate, Florence. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

developing ethics of urban planning in Florence that carried latent within it an ideal of integrated networks of public and private, open and clear spaces.[82] In just the same way, the soundscape of Florence had to be coordinated as a series of integrated frequencies. Such minute specifications of how the city's bells were rung reflected the legislative care necessary to prevent the confusion produced by the unchecked profusion of noises resulting from an unregulated soundscape. Left alone, the auditory landscape risked dissolving into chaos, but the willingness to negotiate the torturous legal labyrinth of rights, privileges, and duties that were demanded by competing interests, as well as the enactment of strict legislation for transgressions, are a testament to how crucial a well-functioning soundscape was in the planning ethos of the premodern city. Clear sounds meant clear messages, and they were as important an element of urban space as streets and squares. Or, to put it another way, a meaningless, overloaded landscape of sounds was as unwelcome and frightening as streets and squares clogged with obstacles and violence.

Policies of architectural destruction may not have been uniformly enforced, and such policies likely would have become less desirable as the city was increasingly conceived as a physical and affective unity, rather than an assemblage of competing fiefdoms.[83] Charles Burroughs sees this transformation emerging in the fourteenth century, and it is dramatically borne out by the fate of the Badia's bell tower (discussed in chapter 1), which the commune first destroyed, then allocated funds to rebuild several years later. Villani

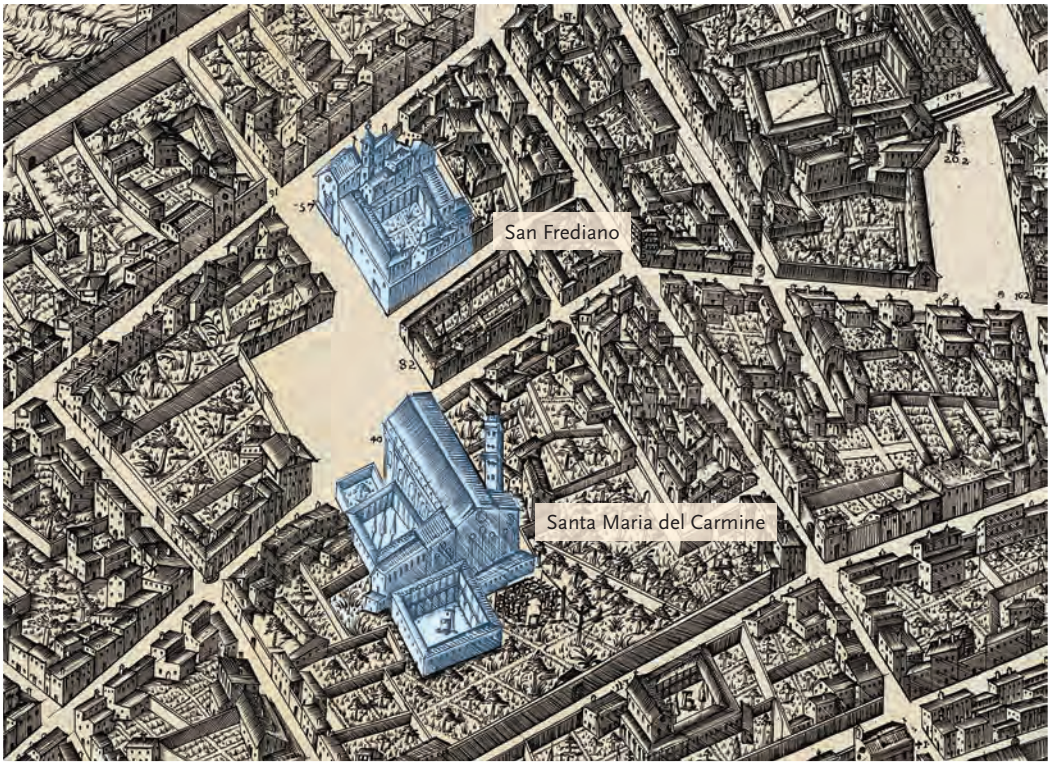


FIG. III The mendicant/parochial battle over control of the soundscape in the Oltrarno: San Frediano and the Carmine. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

notes that the destruction of the bell tower, which was so much a part of the city's daily *civic* life, was felt to be a blasphemy in and of itself.[84]

These cases reveal what was at stake in the right to sound bells, where the call to worship and divine offices was also the right to forge certain affinities and loyalties within specified zones. It points to how sacred territories were the spatial effects of contentious struggles across the city. The size of a territory corresponded to the size of a bell. The bell was the voice that transformed urban space into sacred territory, and interested parties jealously guarded their right to create and their ability to control such spaces. The ephemeral but real power of these temporary spatial zones is made clear in the concession made to Sant'Ambrogio by Urban V on October 26, 1362. It allowed the nuns to celebrate Mass while the city was under interdict, as long as they celebrated it beyond the walls of the city and the doors of the church remained closed, the bells were not rung, and the offices were sung or celebrated in low voices (*voce bassa*).[85] Closed doors and silent bells were meant to counter the tendency of the Mass to radiate aurally out beyond the walls of the church. Such sounds contained the power to invest space with the spiritual presence of the church, which was precisely what a papal interdiction was supposed to deny to an urban community. This exception makes it clear that the power of the Mass was a function of gathered bodies, singing voices, and ringing bells, all of which together inevitably created a sacred topography. It also reveals, however, a certain anxiety on the part of papal authorities that it was not only participating

directly in the Mass that counted, but that just hearing the Mass, the incantations of the catholic rite washing over the faithful, would have had the power to bless the city's spaces in a way that contravened the aims of the papal interdict. Therefore, Mass was understood as a specific type of sound that, just like a bell, had to be heard to be real. It had to exist in space in order to perform its function.

The two-tower system of civic bells was designed to avoid the complex and conflicting religious soundscapes of the city and overlay a common acoustic topography. Its success depended on its monopoly over the city at certain times and over the meaning of certain concrete events and abstract ideas, such as justice, victory, even the idea of what it meant to be Florentine. As much as bells may have disciplined the body politic, the success of these efforts rested in part on the degree to which individuals could identify with these sounds and derive an affinity for a collective past and an anticipated future. Evidence for this is found in Florentines' deep attachment to their communal bells, such as the lost Martinella. Along with the Florentine army's vermillion *carroccio* (war chariot) and military standard, the Martinella was a central organizing element of the city's military forces (figure 84).[86] Villani's description of the war against Siena, in which this bell was lost, is key to understanding how the collective memory of its sound continued, albeit with painful overtones, to define Florentines in the present as a united community.

As chapter 2 made clear, the Martinella was a particularly mobile bell, moving from the church of Santa Maria Sopra Porta to the gate and then out into the field of battle, so that its ring always represented the presence of Florence out in the field. It was taken down from the gate, placed in a wooden tower (*castello*) built expressly for this purpose, and carried out of the city in a specially designed *carroccio*.[87] Out in the theater of war, it was used, along with the red and white military standard that flew from the *carroccio*, to coordinate the movement of troops. Locating the bell of the rival forces was also the way in which the Florentine forces, in May 1260, were able to find enemy positions.[88] For Villani, after the Florentine defeat, the Martinella and the standard—sound and image—stood for the lost noble pride of the old Florentine *popolo* at the same time that they organized fighting forces.[89]

Villani's digression, in the midst of the narrative of this disastrous war, to commemorate this bell serves to heighten the tragic dimensions of the looming defeat at Montaperti. By September of that year the *carroccio* and the Martinella were practically all that remained of the shattered Florentine forces. Abandoned on the battlefield, they were taken as trophies by the victorious Sienese. However, in a gesture that demonstrates the profound attachment that Villani invests in the Martinella, he does not follow the bell to the place of shame.[90] Instead, the final image he leaves the reader is the bell and its chariot standing as a lone memorial to a broken *popolo*, a monument to the thousands who lay dead on the battlefield. The bell's analogous silence would now always mark the memory of the loss it had witnessed.[91] This may be the metaphor to which Davidsohn refers when he states that after this defeat the Martinella fell silent, its sound only a painful memory of this Florentine catastrophe.[92]

In terms of the acoustic creation of space, what is also important is the way in which the Martinella came into being as a war bell when it rang from a gate rather than a bell tower, where it was more visible and closer to the regime for which it rang.[93] This gate stood at the point of several conflicting communal zones, including

magnate justice, marriage pacts, class conflict, vendettas, domestic life, horse races, and economic trade.[94] Placing it there may have drawn on its power to unify a divided city, clearing it, temporarily, of other more local and perhaps unwanted associations in order to focus the city's collective consciousness on the need to face the imminent threat of an external enemy. And since the army departed the city from the church of Santa Maria Sopra Porta, which then faced the Mercato Nuovo, in the center of which the *carroccio* waited,[95] it would have passed through the gate's now-ritual threshold along a street that the government had turned into a symbolic military staging ground (figure 81). It was another way in which this main thoroughfare was defined as communal space within the context of the anxiety of war. Where, when, and how bells were rung were powerful markers of urban memory. Unlike permanent monuments, which became invisible to inhabitants who passed them every day, and retreated into the urban unconscious, bells, with their repetitive resonances, opened up spaces and filled them with meaning, staking a claim as voices for and against the city's multiple communities.

"La quale si sente per tutta la città sonare"

In contrast to localized political conflicts, bells acted to bind disparate communities into a larger fictive unity, breaking down the barriers, social and geographic, that separated them, as only sound can do. They were capable of giving a unified voice to a collective sentiment and ensuring a degree of symbolic equality.[96] If Dante, in his evocation of the bell of the Badia (discussed in chapter 1), deployed the sound of a bell to excavate a lost territory of the past, to reconstruct a ruined civic culture through the reimagination of its vanished walls, one must remember that he wrote these lines from exile, consciously remembering the sound of a bell he could no longer physically hear, in order to safeguard an image of the city from falling into oblivion. In contrast, the cloth merchant Goro Dati used the sound of the commune's bells to bind the Florentine government to its territory in the present as he looked toward the future. In his Florentine history, he breaks his narrative account of the city's military conflicts with Milan in order to describe his city's political institutions and monuments.[97] Early in the fifteenth century, he looks across the piazza toward a very different tower, whose bells presided over much expanded spatial domain (figure 112). Marvin Trachtenberg has shown how fourteenth-century Florentine urban planning concepts established a set of design principles that transformed public architecture into a spatially coordinated ensemble of visual authority.[98] He describes how the Palace of the Priors and its tower radiated out geometrically to organize the form and proportions of the square that they dominated, subjecting the viewer to an irresistible image of public power, seen from a specific, privileged vantage point. Goro's description betrays a desire to internalize this visual propaganda, but he is also very much immersed in the full sensorial experience of urban space. He is interested in the durability of architecture, describing how the palace was "made entirely of stone of marvelous strength and beauty." He notes that it was sixty *braccia* high, and upon its projecting gallery of corbelled brackets and crenellations was a fortified tower that soared "another sixty *braccia*, and above it, on its summit, was a beautiful balustrade [of] corbelled brackets covered and crenellated."[99]

Dati evokes the massive solidity of the rusticated stones, moving from the tower's heavy base through its projecting arches, gallery, and crenellations.

FIG. 112 Goro Dati's view across the Piazza della Signoria toward the spectacular beauty of the regime represented by the palace, its tower, and the voice that could be heard throughout the entire city. Photo: Ivo Bazzecchi, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz—Max-Planck-Institut.

He imagines it as a slender but poetic repetition of the base, its stones arranged in the same fortified configuration (figure 113). Standing at the threshold of the piazza, gazing at the monumental façade of the commune in the early fifteenth century, Dati is wholly aware of the visual regime that was constructed for him, one that was supposed to exploit the distancing possibilities of sight in order to configure the individual's relationship to the regime. It is the crowning feature of the architectural ensemble that expresses his anticipation of a universal acoustic community. His description of the palace ends as his eyes rise up to take in the radiating authority symbolized by the palace's tower: "and up inside it are the bells of the commune, that is, the great bell [*la grossa*], which weighs twenty-two thousand pounds, which has no equal in the world, and that of the council [*consiglio*]."[100] Representing the commune and the *popolo* of Florence, the Grossa (Leone) and the Consiglio (Popolo) were the twin pillars of official Florentine urban identity, whose dual nature found visual expression in the red cross and lily (*giglio*) that were inscribed into the architectural surfaces of the city's public monuments (figures 13–15, 114). This audio-visual ensemble constantly reminded Florentines of the wider political community to which they belonged and to which they owed allegiance.[101] Understandably proud of the acoustic magnitude of these bells, Dati was also fascinated by another bell. This was the one connected to the mechanical clock, "which one heard throughout the city sounding the hours of the day and of the night."[102] From the massive block of the palace up to the crenellated tower it supported, he traces the ninety-degree axial turn effected by the pealing of the clock bell, which reverberated out across the entire city.

Creighton Gilbert's incisive analysis of Goro's description emphasizes the upward movement of the passage but departs from the text precisely where Goro reaches the acoustic/aesthetic climax of his description. It is the sonic dimension of the tower that reconnected the palace as an isolated vertical monument to the entire horizontal fabric of the city. Creating communal space by demarcating the borders of the commune's authority, it was a constant sonic reminder of the extent of the regime's jurisdiction. Unlike the bells of the Badia, however, the communal clock bell of the Palazzo Vecchio, marking the modern, equal, secular hours, defined a more universal space, one that transcended Florence's traditional virtuous center, incorporating the spaces of the morally suspect periphery. This new bell attempted to subject urban space to a common set of temporal and spatial coordinates, within which dutiful citizens could establish their position in relation to the political and religious geography of the city (figure 115). The bell that so entranced Goro—the sound of the modern clock and its modern hours—looked toward the future, a future in which the entire space of the city would be unified and ideally ordered around the center of political power.[103]

However, what distinguished the sound of this mechanical clock was the fact that it represented the uncoupling of timekeeping from the day's other integrated secular and sacred temporal rhythms. All the bells in the towers of the communal palaces spoke to the entire city, but the clock was not part of any sonic dialogue since it beat its own rhythm, marking each hour, instead of only a few, which may help to explain why the city's 1415 statutes on bell ringing do not mention the clock. Greeted only by its own monotonous echo, it made sounds but was deaf to all others. It added an increasingly regular and repetitive rhythm to the soundscape. This was the bell, therefore, that promised someone like Goro a progressive future in

FIG. 113 The poetic doubling of the projecting arches, galleries, and crenellations of the base and its tower represented the palace's aesthetic and symbolic power for Goro Dati. Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. Photo by author.

FIG. 114 Communal signs: the standards of Florence that represented its constituent parts painted under the projecting arches of the base block of the Palazzo Vecchio. (*left to right*) *Popolo*, commune, military standard, papacy, priors, *parte guelfa*. Note that they also appear under the arches at the summit of the Bargello's bell tower. (figure 90). Photo by author.

which a more streamlined, simpler, repeating rhythm would harmonize the body politic even more comprehensively. But the dominance of the new regular fixed hours was by no means settled in the fifteenth century, and the clock bell was one more temporal zone added to the soundscape that had to coexist with all others in an increasingly complex web of sounds.

Although the clock was installed originally in 1353, by the fifteenth century an increasingly accurate mechanism was making the use of clocks ever more practical. In addition, their installation and use were a testament to a city's openness to innovation, its wealth, and the presence of a vigorous and active administration.[104] In fact, Goro may have had more reason to single out the clock bell since the city had commissioned a new clock in 1390 and cast a new bell specifically for it in 1397.[105] The sound of the bell, cast at a time of a costly war with Milan, may have represented an act of defiance and perseverance as well as an expression of an unyielding confidence in the city's future at a time of great anxiety.[106]

Although Dante and Goro were looking in opposite directions, they both were describing how sound opened up the temporal flow to incorporate the past and the future within the space of the present. This was the dynamic of collective memory in action, remembering the present and imagining the future as they were inflected within urban space. It made the city the ultimate memory palace and demonstrated how the past and the present were not foreign territories. The sounds that bells made were privileged markers of this collective memory. As they rang, they held these temporal territories in a certain dynamic tension, and it was within this tension that Florentines were assembled into groups of overlapping communities. It is ironic that the sound that unified the city for Goro, the one that would represent modern abstract time, would ultimately, far into the future, form part of the techniques of modern life that have split the past and the future from a present that is

FIG. 115 On the left is the housing built onto the back of the palace's bell tower for the massive mechanism that ran the mechanical public clock of Florence. On the right, the eighteenth-century clock face can be seen on the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio. The first clock was installed and began marking the hours on March 25, the feast of the Annunciation and the Florentine New Year, in 1353. Photos by author.

incessantly shrinking toward its own temporal vanishing point, when bells no longer dominate the urban soundscape and the incomprehensible noise of modern cities drowns out the sounds of the past.

The examples of Dante (poet, philosopher), Goro (merchant, historian), and Albericus (jurist) reveal that the sound of bells permeated the most important facets of urban life. They stimulated memory, brought the past into direct contact, and even inspired critique of the present. They pointed the way to the future, while they established and maintained a certain idea of communal authority over the city and its citizens and made present and real the force of the law in the regulation of time and space. The sound of a bell could certainly evoke diverse reactions, but it could never be ignored. The acoustic environment in Florence at the threshold of the Renaissance contained enough sounds, and enough bells, through which a whole range of social identities could be expressed. It confronted Florentines with an ambivalent voice that, on the one hand, disciplined their labor and regulated their movements, but, on the other, also called them together to celebrate and to pray, allowing them to imagine larger collective bonds beyond family and friends. Bells told them where to go, and when, but they also told them how to get there and what to expect when they arrived. Therefore, the sounds that emanated from bell towers were memory markers and landmarks in the most profound and immediate sense, sonic reference points that helped Florentines navigate within and around the spatial configurations of political ideals, social hierarchies, and personal relationships. They never ceased to prompt, accompany, and give meaning to the most momentous political events of the city and the most quotidian acts of an individual's daily life, fundamental elements of who they were as a complex social body.

Suoni, Voci, Rumori
Listening to the City

4.

Literary narratives and popular stories form an essential part of this study for the way they express, in creative and critical ways, the same kinds of concerns as do documentary sources such as legislation, histories, and diaries. Such storytelling practices were critical ways in which people came to terms with their relationship to and the part they played in the urban environment. They do not give rise to a history of facts so much as generate a field of historical experience. And this historical experience was predicated on the same dialectic of an ideal harmonic order and the more chaotic but effective spatial practices that generated urban life and imbued it with meaning.

If the sound of bells constituted a common nonverbal language that marked the rhythms of urban life, the soundscape was also punctuated by a culture of oral exchange that centered on the lived space of the piazza. This was the place of the vital, daily, face-to-face contacts through which one's multiple, "sometimes incompatible, roles of kinsman, friend, political ally, tax assessor, business partner, client, parishioner" were played out.[1] The piazza, as architectural space and social phenomenon, therefore, was the fulcrum around which a verbal culture negotiated its relationships through the medium of words, spoken or sung, shouted or whispered. It was the place where familial bonds were solidified, friendships maintained, loyalties tested, deals made, and rumors repeated. The piazza was a multifunctional space where the sound of bells confronted the not always sonorous chorus of competing voices, where the elegance of Amphion's lyre met the cacophony of Pucci's *mercato*.

This confrontation was implicit with each enactment of the official flow of information from government to governed, where an oral culture was always threatening to inflect, mishandle, or even drown out such sounds.

This chapter deals with the spatial transactions between stories and voices as vital aspects of the rich acoustic culture of the piazza. It explores how the city and its spaces were intimately involved in stimulating and inflecting narrative gestures, how they deployed architecture and space as the structuring mechanism of meaningful social exchange. Therefore, throughout this chapter, the relative opacity or porosity of urban space, its capacity to facilitate or hinder the movement of bodies and information, continually reappears as meaning-generating forces, sources of humor, resistance, and even self-discovery.

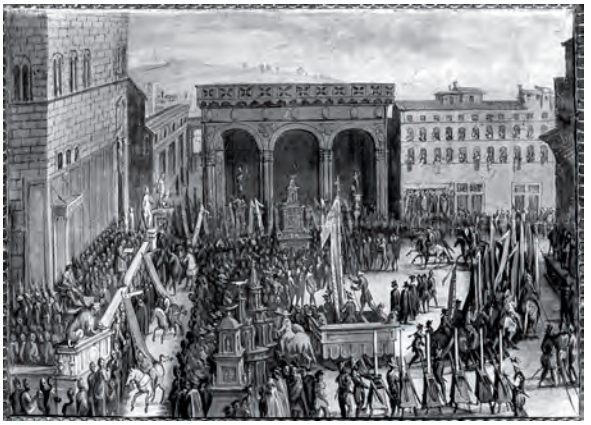


FIG. 116 Giovanni Stradano's *Festa degli Omaggi*, Sala di Gualdrada, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence, 1561–62, gives a sense of the staged productions of the Piazza della Signoria, even though the republican mode of public address had long since ceased to operate. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, N.Y.

Urban Communication Systems

In the early morning hours of November 18, 1384, three letters and an olive branch arrived in Florence informing the city that the previous Thursday, Florentine forces had taken control of the city of Arezzo without any looting or plunder. This episode occurred during a major realignment of the city's political use of space in the wake of the fall of the popular government in 1382 and the emergence of an increasingly oligarchic regime. Between the 1380s and the 1430s, "[w]ar and the myths needed to sustain it assumed unprecedented importance and generated a patriotic ideology combining a celebration of Florence's domination of Tuscany with its self-assigned duty to defend republican liberty."[2] Such a disciplined victory, therefore, was cause for a major civic celebration, and one erupted informally that evening. Bonfires throughout the city were immediately set ablaze.[3] In the morning, the commune's bells sounded to assemble all the citizens in the Piazza della Signoria (figure 116). A proclamation from the Palace of the Priors was sent out to all parts of the city by mounted criers blowing silver trumpets, ordering all shops to be closed.[4] The priors and their advisory colleges ceremonially exited the palace and assembled on the *ringhiera*, a platform that served as the city's public stage, all of them wearing the olive wreath of victory. There they sat as Coluccio Salutati, the city's chancellor, read out the official letters of victory to the crowd gathered below. The commune's trumpets and bells sounded again and were answered first by the bells of the cathedral and the Badia, then by churches throughout the entire city.[5] In the meantime, the piazza filled up with brigades of horsemen jousting in celebration, the tiny bells attached to their horses' finery echoing in miniature the city's celebratory sounds.[6] This was Florence in a state of official jubilation.

FIG. 117 The visual proximity of the bell towers of the Florentine church (*left*) and state (*right*). Photo by author.

From this anonymous account, one clearly sees how the official dynamics of civic celebration were characterized by opposing lines of movement. A succession of different sounds—bells, trumpets, and voices—gathered people together, approved a holiday, and announced a victory, as two monumental and interlocked aural armatures enacted the dialogue of church and state (figure 117). As sounds radiated out from the center of political power, bodies were drawn toward it, fulfilling the promise of the sonic construction of social unity through the collective celebration of the power of the republic. Both government and citizens had specific roles to play, which were choreographed through a sequence of aural signifiers. Only sound had the capacity to make present, real, and universal this idea of power as series of omnidirectional waves radiating out from the center in all directions. But rather than a simple one-way monologue, the ideal soundscape was an attempt to unify the disparate localities of the city into a common and interactive space.

However, in this intricate choreography, any disruptions in its rhythms, any gaps and silences, were immediately noticed, gave rise to intense anxiety and fear, and led witnesses to seek out answers in the circulation of unofficial stories. This was the case in the events surrounding the entrance of the newly elected priors in 1387, an episode recounted by the same chronicler and described in chapter 3, in which an anxious government, determined to ward off nocturnal insurrection, silenced the city's bells. The silence set off a fevered public dialogue in the streets, where rumors rapidly multiplied about what the government feared, who was responsible, why the fire broke out, and what the disruption to the soundscape meant.[7]

In the first episode, we witness the orderly working of the city's official mechanisms of acoustic communication. However, in the second episode, the author taps into the largely unregulated, collective circulation of unofficial information that characterized the other end of the acoustic spectrum, the unstable sphere of rumor, gossip, and hearsay. This was the murmur and hum of popular sonic frequencies traversing the city that official sounds were meant to counter, control, and supersede. However, it was precisely their constant tension, which often led to open conflict, the way they undermined, parodied, condemned, confounded, or even enhanced each other, that led to the production of a vibrant urban soundscape that was, nevertheless, always in danger of collapsing into aural confusion. Whether it was politically motivated citizens trying to decipher official pronouncements, merchants bent on acquiring proprietary information, whispering conspirators, public pacts, burdened animals, market hawkers, or professional storytellers singing to boisterous audiences, this tension provided ways of speculating on the relative stability of the government, so that mutations in official rhythm were indices to significant developments and certain truths behind official events. Francesco Guicciardini would later remind his readers how difficult it was to make sense of these tensions, describing them as a dense cloud or a thick wall between palace and square that allowed the circulation of much erroneous information.[8] But it was through these acoustic topographies that Florentines forged, maintained, and lost their hard-won identities, which relied on an acute understanding of the relationship between sound and space, noise and buildings.

The acoustic regime constructed by the Florentine government was meant to express its collective, unified, and elegant voice. Therefore, individual officeholders never spoke in public. Instead, the official voices of the commune came from an emerging professional class of rhetoricians and professional storytellers. Official sounds masked the secret deliberations of the city's central governing bodies. And as much as the fortified architecture that housed and protected them physically, it was also supposed to contain their secrets and mediate the diffusion of public information. The dynamics of this system highlight how the government relied on a series of proxies to send a message that individual members of that government never uttered in public. Ulrich Meier has noted this intrinsic silence of the regime and explained it as an effect of the charisma inherent in the office of the priors, the city's executive governing body, whose members, in theory at least, ceased to express their individual status for the duration of their tenure. The ritual robes they put on subsumed them into a collective body so that their individual voices played no part in the ritual voice of the commune. Silence maintained the solemnity of the *signoria* (priorate), whose individual participants were not necessarily gifted writers or accomplished speakers.[9]

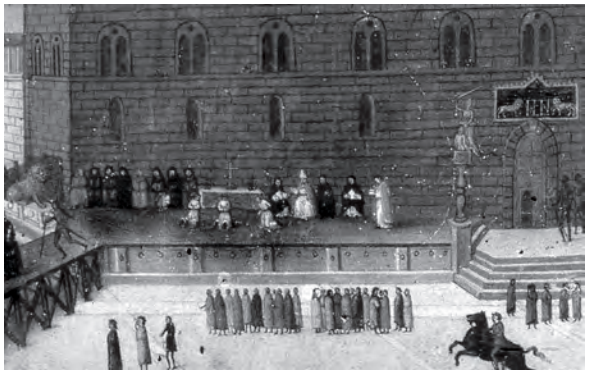


FIG. 118 The priors assembled on the *ringhiera* (upper left) wearing their robes of state in a detail from an anonymous depiction of the martyrdom of Savonarola. Museo di San Marco, Florence. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, N.Y.

A shroud of ritual secrecy characterized the tenure of the signoria, who always deliberated behind closed doors.[10] Appearing on the *ringhiera* for official ceremonies, they sat in silence as the sonic apparatus of the state unfolded around them in the sound of the bells and the voice of the chancellor (figure 118). At official consultations inside the palace, the Capitano or the chancellor gave speeches and orations in the presence of a silent signoria. Even the advisory colleges, who faced the assembled priors in the palace during deliberations, did not hear their responses. Instead, the priors went into private chambers to deliberate, and their notaries communicated their decisions.[11] All their decisions had to be transcribed, translated into official laws and proclamations by the chancery so that they carried the authority of the state when read out by functionaries. Without the rhetorical eloquence of professional scribes and voices, the regime might fail to convince the ears of the Florentine public.

This was in contrast to the collective cries with which the citizenry replied to such official declarations in the case of a *parlamento*, where the assembled crowd was formally required to shout approval or rejection of pending legislation read out from the ringhiera. Their shouts of "sì, sì, sì!" were dutifully noted down by the notary as the willing assent of the *popolo*, which then acquired the force of law.[12] Even though the parlamento metamorphosed into a political tool manipulated by a progressively smaller circle of elites, citizens gathered in the square could deny the authorities their shouts of affirmation and respond with stones and other forms of resistance.[13] The threshold between the silent palace and voices in the square was formally breached every two months when the names of potential priors were randomly drawn in the sala dei Dugento and read from open windows of the Udienza so that the crowd in the square could confirm their status (figure 119).[14] Thus, it was the square, the palace, and the sounds exchanged between them that produced the authority of a regime whose participants were supposed to be citizens just like any other. In this way, architecture, sound, voices, and silence were part of a larger ritual, a mutually constitutive process that staged Florentine communal identity.

Anxiety about the inherent instability of a government's ability to maintain acoustic clarity in the face of crisis is comically demonstrated in Sacchetti's story about Florence's war with the papacy of Gregory XI between 1375 and 1378.[15] While besieged by mercenary armies, the city of Macerata is inundated by a mighty flood. A woman on her way down to the cellar for wine is suddenly submerged in water and cries out for help, "Accurr'uomo!" As her husband rushes to aid her, he too plunges helplessly into the water, echoing her desperate cry. From here, the cries of frantic neighbors set off a chorus of alarmed voices whose message is transmitted by the city's guards until it reaches the central government, where it reverberates not as a call for help but a call to arms: "All'arme,

FIG. 119 Windows of the Sala dell'Udienza dei Signori, Palazzo Vecchio. Results from the *tratte*, or the drawing of names by lot for government offices, would be read out to the crowd assembled below in the square. Similarly, in 1494, the result of the priors' vote to declare Piero de' Medici a public enemy was communicated from the window to the citizens. Photo by author.

all'arme!" Rumors rapidly proliferate about the enemy entering the city, alarm bells sound, guards take up arms, townspeople fill the streets, fearful and armed, and descend on the piazza, only to find it barricaded by a nervous government. The noise in the square only grows louder amid fears of imminent violence.

From victims, to guards, through the bureaucracy, to the executive government—an individual mishap is transformed into a military invasion, comically underscoring the possible distortions that a damaged soundscape could bring to bear on an unwitting populace already predisposed to the fear of attack. Seeing that no one was coming, the priors attempt to send a message back from the center to the periphery. Needless to say, this message, too, suffers a similar fate as it moves in fits and starts through unreliable means. The story ends with the comical figure of Frate Antonio, trapped under the weight of a large shield and a bell clapper, mistaken for the enemy by a frantic city in complete acoustic disarray. The priors then finally regain their nerve, everyone returns home, and the surrounding towns have much to laugh about. The narrator finishes by mocking the paranoia of a community that, like drunken geese, entangled itself in confusion while losing all semblance of reason.[16]

In the real world, the flow of official information required a constant repetition of official sounds. In a face-to-face economy, information was transmitted from the mouths, gestures, and visible signs of moving bodies. This underscores the important role that town criers (*banditori*) played in properly verbalizing official messages in an environment that always contained the

potential to distort flows of information.[17] In effect, the heralds "made public" (*piuvichare*) the will of the government in the network of spaces that they helped to constitute as public space.

Storytelling in the Piazza

> *Overhearing their conversation, we began to delight in his simplicity and in what the youths were saying to him. And after we had listened to them for a while, Ser Niccolò said to us: "I want to make you laugh."*
>
> —PIERO VENEZIANO, "BIANCO ALFANI"

Florence's vibrant vernacular culture was in part due to Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, along with the popular tradition of satirical narratives (*burle e baie*), civic celebrations, and devotional texts.[18] But stories also needed space: spaces in which to take place, to be reenacted, told and retold, remembered, written and rewritten, transformed, copied, picked apart, and perhaps forgotten. The performative space of storytelling in the Renaissance shows how this practice linked architecture, sound, voices, writing, and the memory of the past. It highlights the crucial role that stories played in linking communities to the spaces in which they lived by integrating both memories of the past and expectations of the future. Narrative themes were directly linked to the character of actual events, as Florentines explored how such themes could be reoriented, reused, and related to their own spatial experiences. Storytelling was a ritual part of many social activities. It took place at informal dinners, circulated in shared books, and could always be heard in the piazza.

These urban stories were intimately bound up in the creation, negotiation, and transformation of social identities, infusing urban experience with a multitude of competing, malleable narrative strains through which Florentines recognized their neighbors, their government, their religion, and their assumptions about love, adventure, and their past. Urban space was filled with "[s]torytellers, public reciters or performers of verse . . . , town criers, gossips, circulating rimes and songs and abusive verse, telltale travelers and merchants, and even preachers: all these were the mass media of the day."[19] They represented the collective voice of government, laws, celebrations, the past, family memories, news, animosities, friendships, and a love of elaborate pranks. By the late fifteenth century, the act of interpreting events within a cosmological framework was a shared science. Self-declared prophets on the benches of the city addressed the crowd with the fantastic portents of monstrous births and flocks of butterflies.[20] They had picked up the conventions of storytelling developed in the city and grafted them onto images of the future, rather than the past. By the late fifteenth century, Florence became a major center of the anonymous diffusion of such prophecies, which were linked to the influence of the Dominican friar and "civic prophet" Girolamo Savonarola.[21]

The same motivations and preoccupations about the use and abuse of public space that drove legislation in Florence also reappear as central themes in countless urban narratives. A cluster of concepts—limits, borders, and thresholds; networks, movement, and spaces; the creation of topographies, communities, and collective identities—were interrogated from a range of perspectives. In terms of producers and consumers, the dialogic exchange between legal statutes, literary culture, and urban space involved many of the same groups of people: wealthy patrons, mendicant preachers, notaries, artisans, and government functionaries. Therefore, between laws, literature,

FIG. 120 Piazza San Martino. The building on the right now occupies a significant area of the original square used for storytelling performances. Photo by author.

and spatial experiences, the same interests, preoccupations, desires, and anxieties were at play, all of which participated fully in the construction, maintenance, and meaning of the city. It was a multivalent urban negotiation that in its performance produced the defining structures of the public piazza as a privileged moment within a constellation of urban spatial networks; public space as a process, rather than a product.

The circulation of poetry in an urban oral culture like that of the market square brought together elites and their inferiors and forced them to interact with various classes of women, artisans, and foreigners.[22] Public storytellers constituted a fundamental part of the vocal culture of Renaissance Florence, and they could be heard throughout the city.[23] It was in this context that the literary corpora of Boccaccio and Dante, Sercambi, Aesop, classical stories, mythical histories, and medieval romances circulated side by side with the Florentine tradition of satirical poems (*burle e baie*), practical jokes (*beffe*), civic celebrations, and devotional texts.[24] It was an eclectic mix of the literary, the popular, the spiritual, and the vulgar. Such a mixed audience made Dante "the poet of wool-workers, bakers, and the like."[25] Storytelling events were regular and popular, producing a circulating body of material that served as a source and inspiration.

The main site for narrative performances in Florence was the piazza in front of the church of San Martino, in the heart of the city (figure 120). Before the church was destroyed in 1478 and replaced with the current oratory, which is now oriented toward the "second small piazza of San Martino," performances took place on benches (*panche*) that were placed in the

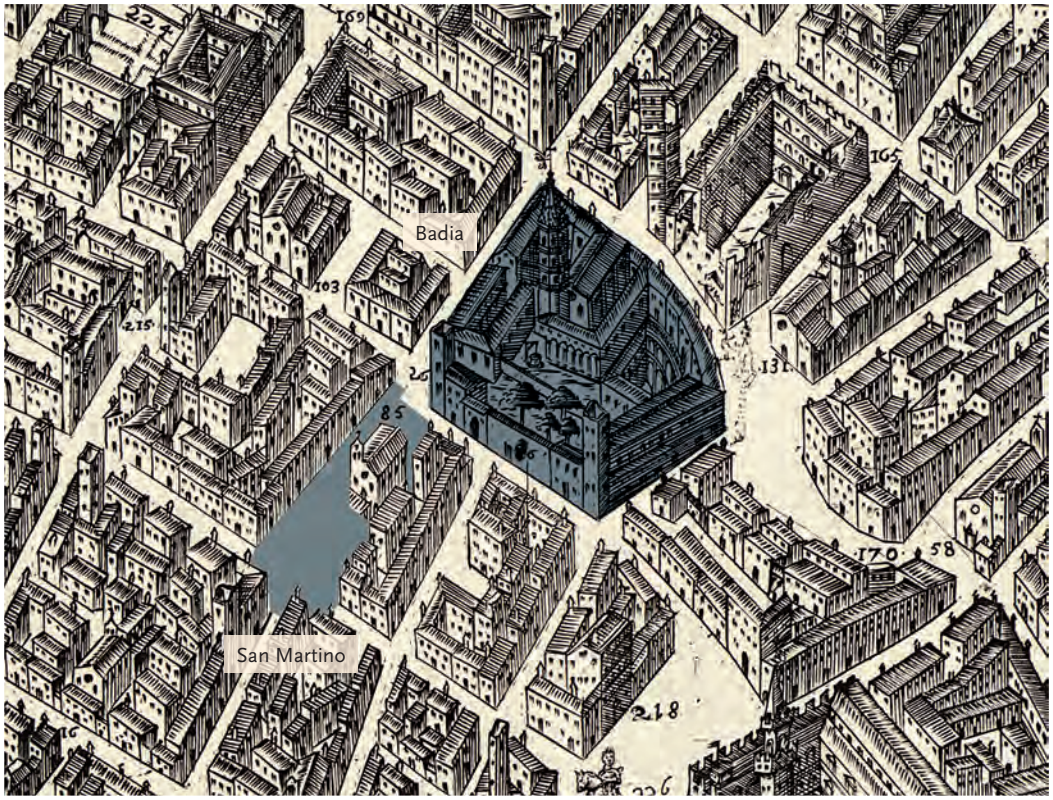


FIG. 121 The probable area of Piazza San Martino before the addition of structures after the reorientation of the church. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

current Piazza dei Cimatori.[26] Part of the entrance portal and lunette above it that once held an image of the Virgin with two saints are still visible, and the housing block that now impinges on the square was constructed only after the church was reoriented (figures 121, 122).[27] Along the north side were the domestic properties of such prestigious families as the Donati, while the area itself had one of the densest concentrations of wool-manufacturing shops in the city.[28] This guaranteed a mix of proprietors, manufacturers, and artisans, as well as unskilled workers in the trade. Such a mix of Florentine society was reflected in the performances that took place on Sundays, feast days, and often over the course of several consecutive evenings.[29] The site, in the heart of the old city, was large enough to contain a sizable crowd but closed enough to provide for an intimate, vibrant, and even raucous exchange between performer and audience, or even between members of the audience.

The numerous names of the theatrical performers—*cantatori*, *cantarini*, *cantimpanche*, *cantastorie*, or *cantafavelle*—reflect their variety. The actors would continually reinterpret stories in the performance, always experimenting with new modes, making additions, and introducing variations. They were careful to adapt to different publics, while they would add to lapses in memory with improvised inventions, filling lacunae and clearing up irregularities in meter. They would often interrupt themselves at climactic moments of the narrative to build on the anticipation

of the crowd, suspend its anxiety, and give speakers a moment to catch their breaths. These ephemeral performances were then retold, updated, and copied into personal compilations by listeners to suit current tastes and themes.[30] It was a constant collective development between the audience and the storytellers, who were, of course, working the crowd for money.[31]

These narratives lived in their urban environment. The singer acknowledged that what mattered was the exchange between performer and audience and that such an experience transformed the physical space around it. To the charge that he was "humbling and abasing himself" and "throwing away his verses" at San Martino, the much-loved poet known as L'Altissimo countered, "I do it for pleasure, but it does not drag me down, / since I have in this street, in this small piazza / an audience so great and so happy," adding later, "'Oh timid one, behold, this street may be glorified by the worthy picaresque wisdom offered here."[32] The self-reflexive irony of these lines, likely part of the performance itself, drives home the interactive nature of the relations between storyteller, audience, and urban space, helping to forge a social consensus between urban classes.[33] These were Florentines speaking to themselves.

Antonio Pucci's *zibaldone* provided one of the most important compilations of the standard repertoire, influencing Florentine storytelling well into the fifteenth century.[34] Such texts included popular sayings; moral exempla; observations on the disposition of women, the education of children, the character of priests, doctors, and notaries; sacred songs of penance or instruction; biblical extracts; songs of love, fulfilled and unrequited; historical epics; the origin myths; as well as popular verse translations of Latin poets and prose writers.[35] This mix of genres and themes produced a reciprocal dynamic between performers and their audiences, whose relative cacophony provided the means of creating, evoking, establishing, remembering, and fortifying a public culture present at the moment of performance itself.

FIG. 122 The remains of the old portal of San Martino before the church was reoriented. Photo by author.

Books, too, were copied at great expense of one's personal time, and, as a result, they became objects of great personal value. Compilations of texts were also works in the making, with additions over time

and generations.[36] They represented a parallel commentary, recording a dialogue with urban events and entertainments. Books were lent out, returned, kept, and even stolen, as a letter sent by Francesco Buondelmonti to Giovanni Acciaiuoli concerning his personal copy of the *Decameron* implies.[37] Francesco's anxiety about losing possession of this popular book is emphasized by his repeated instructions not to give it to anyone else for fear that he would not ever get it back.[38] Such anxiety, stemming from a book's status as a private object containing public content, merges the public and the private worlds of Florentine culture. In the intervals between performances, this interactive reading culture dismembered and rebuilt texts as communal monuments to popular wisdom, moral desires, ideas, and memories. It mixed together diverse narratives and patriotic literature, so that the daily business of government was juxtaposed with home remedies and recipes, as well as the graphic realism of ridiculous, amatory, cruel, and obscene stories.[39]

The official counterparts to the stories sung at San Martino were the vernacular speeches made by the herald of the commune, who celebrated military victories, sang to the priors at dinner, and expounded on good government when the signoria made its formal entrance into the palace every two months. Heralds might also moonlight as popular singers and therefore straddled the line between public narratives as products of the piazza and as a means of edifying and entertaining the regime.[40] Antonio di Meglio (1384–1448), the most prolific of the heralds of the commune, also sang at San Martino, demonstrating how these two forms of social identity-building were interlocked.[41] Such patriotic speeches could also be heard at San Martino and were often copied into personal scrapbooks. The change of venue suggests that the less formal context of storytelling could infuse the conformist rhetoric of official narratives with a certain amount of space for satire and oral critique and presupposes an acceptance of the government's authority by the very fact of its participation in the city's street culture. Doubtless this constituted an ambivalent but politically significant acoustic landscape, as attested by Cosimo de' Medici's active patronage of San Martino performances after his return from exile in 1434.[42]

The biography of Antonio's contemporary Burchiello, however, shows how the intimate social encounters in the piazza also resisted strategies of dominant control.[43] According to his own poem, he would write down all the nasty actions of the city's lower classes and then turn them into sonnets. He was a barber, whose shop was located on via Calimala; then, as now, such professional space served as a hub for the exchange of information and stories.[44] According to literary historian Domenico Guerri, he would take his lute to Piazza San Martino, where he imagined it locked in a poetic battle with the humanist poets.[45] He would evoke the spontaneity and randomness of urban experience, building on fragments of daily life to create poems connected loosely by alliteration and not by semantic clarity.[46] He created parodies of high poetic style while he gave dignity and grace to poverty through language. More important, Burchiello was a vagabond. As he roamed the streets without money, his voice became the cry of a kind of ideal interpreter of the city, an internal outcast. He could be considered a real-life prototype for the vagabond that Alberti's antihero Momus praises, ironically, as freer than anyone else in the city's public spaces. For Alberti, the vagabond's power derived precisely from his powerlessness and aimless movements, which gave him the ability to criticize with impunity from everywhere at once: "the theaters belong to beggars, the porticoes

to beggars—in fact, every public place belongs to beggars!"[47] Not bound by the aural protocols of the piazza, only he dared speak freely from the podium of power, in the "forum" where he did not fear the raised and judging eyebrows of his elders.[48]

Storytellers, both effective and clumsy, fill the pages of Florentine urban literature, addressing audiences from the pulpit, in piazze, in kitchens, in bedrooms, and at the dinner table. As socially valuable commodities, stories embedded the collective memory of a civic society within the urban environment. Therefore, it is not surprising that bad storytellers are condemned, not just ridiculed. The hopelessness of the knight's story in the *Decameron* (6.1) is not in its content; in fact, it is a very good story. However, he forgets names and things, repeatedly restarts, and in general messes up the story's delivery, which is then detached from the story's content.[49] The performance causes the woman who is his audience to feel ill to the point of death, and she has to extricate herself and the knight from the morass.[50] Such mangling of Florence's cultural store of narratives literally grated on the ears of its citizens, causing a sonic dissonance that had to be silenced. To be called a good storyteller, on the other hand, was a shorthand means of praise, and the painter Giotto's reputation for narrative prowess was commended even by Boccaccio himself, who paid tribute to it in a novella where the painter is the storytelling protagonist. In the prelude to this story, Boccaccio links the painter's talent to his ability to delightfully fool his audience with the intense realism of his paintings.[51]

This is foregrounded by a well-known but little-analyzed text by Poggio Bracciolini found in his popular collection of stories known as *Facezie*, which he published between 1438 and 1452. It is a very short story about a rather long story told over several days in the piazza.[52] One night, one of Poggio's neighbors, whom he describes as a simpleton (*homo simplex*), was listening to the performance, and upon hearing the promise that Hector of Troy would die in the course of the story, exhorted the performer with money and words not to kill such a great hero so soon. This continued at each evening's performance until he finally was forced to listen to the hero's death, which he did with great sadness, not to mention great poverty.[53] The text gives evidence of the popularity and frequency of storytelling at San Martino, as commentators have noted, but its internal evidence also points to larger social issues of the urban experience of storytelling.[54] Certain storytellers were highly praised for their ability to hold audiences, and Dale Kent has shown how their repertoire demanded a relatively broad range of learning.[55] Poggio's naïve listener misrecognizes narrative as conterminous with reality itself, so that it comes alive precisely at the moment and in the space where it is uttered by a voice that takes complete command of the space. Here the lower-class listener is mocked for his inability to separate reality from representation, the dynamics of style, and the integrity of content, in contrast to Boccaccio's fourteenth-century praise of Giotto's ability to do the same in the visual register. Although separated by a century, these stories point to an ongoing ambivalence about the power of sound and images to fool the two senses most connected to mental cognition. The simpleton's lack of sophistication does not allow him to distinguish between drama and life. Therefore, the performance of narratives, which was embedded in dialogue, was subject to potential manipulative forces to which images usually were not. The formulation of a painter's style, compositional structures, and narrative innovations was, by and large, controlled by the system of studio apprenticeship. However, the much

freer access to words by people made the integrity of stories much more fluid and subject to degrees of dissolution by a whole range of verbal practices. Poggio was using this story to express concern over the way in which ancient literature was appropriated and vulgarized by forces within the public sphere. Attempts by the popular classes to make these stories their own may have been considered as potentially violent acts inflicted on prized cultural monuments.

Unmediated by proper intellectual erudition, such stories could be completely misunderstood. Poggio's story also alludes to the distinct differences in audiences. Narrative performances at San Martino may have brought a wide range of Florentines together, but this did not mean they were united by the experience, or that they reacted in similar ways. Poggio's text actually points to the way Florentines may have differentiated themselves from each other, defining themselves in particular relationships to stories. It expresses his distaste for identifying with the lower classes through the enjoyment of the same civic performance. Clearly, for Florentines, being a good listener was as important as being a good speaker. Their responses, in their *zibaldoni*, attest to the urgency of listening and applying what one heard. The circulation of Pucci's personal compilation would help to guarantee a certain commonality and agreement among performances, allowing audiences to compare and discuss differences of style. The *cantastorie*, therefore, were ambivalent figures, representing the intersection of a multifaceted and vibrant literary culture that was in no way homogeneous. But their rhetorical powers possessed at least the illusion, and perhaps some of the promise, along with the shadow of the threat, that both listeners and the space of the piazza could be controlled through the careful manipulation of language.

The circulation of voices, stories, propaganda, books, and *zibaldoni* straddled the spaces between the verbal and the written, between the spoken and the read. *Zibaldoni* were a means of organizing, constructing, storing, and preserving memory. Kent remarks that it is notable that Florentines preferred the classical spatio-architectural model of memory, where the image of a palace is constructed in the mind to store information, over the medieval system developed in memory treatises, which focused on the written words of books that are inscribed in the mind during sleep.[56]

Language, Space

Boccaccio's *Decameron*, written in the wake of the plague and set outside Florence during this monumental crisis, is full of characters with the ability to manipulate language, to control its meaning and, therefore, the space around them. Consider the wife in the third novella of the third day, who seeks a lover of true quality because of her disposition toward her rich but undeserving husband; "she judged no man of base condition, however rich he were, to be worthy of a noblewoman, and saw that despite all his riches, all he was capable of was recognizing the elements of a piece of fabric."[57] In order to get a message to her prospective lover, she has to modulate, or even deform, her speech so that it passes through the medium of a trusting but oblivious friar without losing its intended meaning. The story she tells to the friar is a falsehood whose believability—to the friar—seems to rest on his masculine anxiety about the penetration of the, in this case barren, domestic space of matrimony by a gallant young lover. She invents a story in which the very lover she hopes to procure is depicted as a

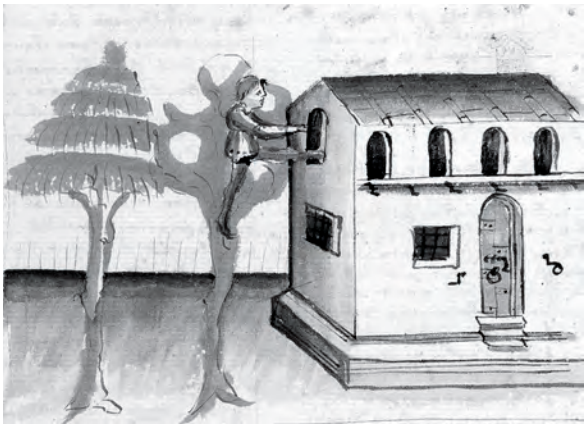


FIG. 123 The lover entering the woman's bedroom through an upper-story window. Ludovico Ceffini, illustration of the third story of the third day of Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*, fifteenth century, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ital. 63, fol. 97r. Photo: BnF.

threat to her honor. Complaining to the friar that the man ought to leave her alone, she describes the kind of advances she actually wants him to carry out. The friar is able to transmit this message faithfully because it seems to embody the codes of honor, chastity, and matrimonial fidelity that are constantly reiterated in the *Decameron*. After hearing the message from the friar, the would-be lover, "more aware than the holy friar, without too much delay, understood the shrewdness of the woman."[58] He understands that the part he is to play is exactly that laid out by the unwitting friar (figure 123). The message, therefore, arrives in an unadulterated form, a product of the desire or fantasy of transparency. In effect, the woman has to manipulate the social structures that circumscribe the limits of her desire through a linguistic message that hides its inner content from the medium that carries it, allowing the recipient to unpack its meaning. She is fully aware, however, of the violent potential inherent in men's speech in public space, and knows how careful women have to be in speaking through them as a medium for their desire: "I had it in my heart several times to tell my brothers, but then I thought that men sometimes send messages in a way that provokes terrible responses, of which words are born, and from words one arrives at deeds; for which, in order not to cause evil and scandal, I remained silent."[59]

The same careful prodding and readjusting of the architectural structures that determine the spatial limits of characters allows them to undermine structures that were designed to control their movements in specific ways. Both space and architecture are opaque physical and social media that must be worked on, manipulated, "redesigned" as the characters move through them. They form barriers that separate the desiring subject from the object desired. But, again like language, they contain conduits and fissures that are susceptible to that desire, through which a character can access that object.

In the case of the friar, the woman plays on his moral expectations, which prevent him from interpreting the message, penetrating its surface. As the storyteller tells us, such religious men thought themselves more knowledgeable than anyone else, which makes him blind, of course, to the real intent of a woman whose surface accoutrements—good manners, fine breeding, beauty, and high birth—would have constructed the public image of an honorable woman, which the friar had no reason to question. It is his very ignorance, therefore, that makes him a perfectly efficient medium, carrying messages back and forth between two lovers who decode each other at either end of the conversation. There is no static, no resistance from the volatile spaces of the city. It expresses a dream of wholly transparent communication networks in the city, facilitated by the manipulation of assumptions and allowing female desire to pass through the predominantly masculine networks of the street.

Frate Cipolla, in *Decameron* 6.10, is an able participant in those networks. He is mockingly praised as such a skillful speaker that he could be confused with such figures as Cicero and Quintilian. This is in direct contrast to his servant, however, whose ineptness at storytelling often provokes his wrath, and whose misplaced pursuit of a scullery maid allows the protagonists of the story time to enter the friar's room unnoticed and exchange a carefully guarded relic with a lump of coal. Such a prank was apparently merited because, despite Frate Cipolla's rhetorical power, he actually has no education and therefore is not beyond the public shame that will ensue when he finally unveils the coal. His own empty rhetoric is contrasted to the emptiness of the relic, which the coal would expose for the fake that it is. His whole act is a ruse, a fabricated façade whose dangerous powers need to be purged from the public arena. However, his natural skill and quick thinking allow him to turn the lump of coal into a relic of the fire that killed Saint Lawrence, delighting and not disappointing the expectant crowd. Such aspects of performance, linguistic power, and even deceit connected preachers and storytellers, sermons and tricksters, within the same rhetoric of public persuasion.

But such a figure stands in marked contrast to the public reputation of Coppo di Borghese Domenichi, a historical figure praised in the *Decameron* as a consummate neighborhood storyteller who acted as a kind of memory storehouse for the city.[60] He was well known for telling stories to friends and neighbors, several of which inspired narratives in both the *Decameron* and *Il trecentonovelle*. He was linked to the local community space of the neighborhood square, and stands, in the *Decameron*, for a certain ethics of storytelling that was more seriously concerned with the preservation of the past as it was told, responsibly, in a neighborhood setting, away from the commercial temptations of San Martino.

What this varied collection of storytellers, fabricators, preachers, and lovers shows is just how embedded the performance of narratives was at the threshold of the Renaissance. And the link between the control of words and the control of space, which can itself be linked to Giovanni Cavalcanti's declaration that "whoever holds the piazza will always win the city," accords well with this phenomenon.[61] Effective storytellers were lords of the square while they performed, but it was up to the audience to praise or discipline them. Certainly, the techniques of rewriting popular stories ran up against certain notions of the integrity of texts, perhaps those that were also read in the more academic setting of the Florentine Studio. The "Dante" who was read in that more rarefied space was a different textual experience, and its methodical rigor conflicted with the collective editing of the piazza. This experience points to the way Dante's poetry actually circulated within an informal and popular civic culture, where it suffered the mutilation of improvised and casual repetitions in its multiple positions within the city's soundscape.

Dante's plight was that, although the vernacular idiom always had one foot in the public world of social exchange, his work was also a public monument of sorts and demanded a certain amount of maintenance of its structural integrity for it to persist as a cultural document. What is more, the poetic work could also be conceived as the product of one's labor, over which one was granted some formal control over cost and distribution. Hence, Sacchetti's Dante, encountered in chapter 1, claimed ownership of his poem, of its particular configuration of words, just in the way that the smith who sang his words so badly owned his own tools, through which he fashioned his products and derived his identity.

Ironically, Sacchetti's story about the social rules of singing someone else's poems is not only a reformulation of an ancient Greek source but also a rewriting of his own novella 90.[62] This earlier story recounts how a shoemaker (*calzolaio*) speaks badly about a certain messer Ridolfo da Camerino. Of course, the stories reach Ridolfo's ears, and in response he takes away the shoemaker's lasts, rendering him helpless to work his trade. Here, Sacchetti is playing on social identity and how it is defined, as well as on the difference between direct and indirect slander; the former destroys through content, and the latter damages through style. As such, Dante would suffer by the reduction in quality of his poems through their diffusion and dissolution in the public realm. The question remains as to whether the reader should take the example of Sacchetti himself, who rewrote ancient stories, and then rewrote his own stories, mixing past and the present, high culture with low, classical learning with popular storytelling. What constituted the limits of variations? Did imaginative and well-crafted rewritings constitute a preservation of the integrity of the original story by becoming something independent? If one's story was someone else's, who could own it? Such questions arise from the seemingly easy identification of the blacksmith in Sacchetti's novella, discussed in chapter 1, as a counterfeit narrator, but who was able to draw that line?

Inevitably, the circulation of Dante's work in this field of popular improvisation would suffer the very hacking to pieces, additions, and bastardizations upon which Sacchetti reflected. The implications and serious consequences of such unauthorized mangling of texts so crucial to the civic identities of a certain class are reemphasized in the very next novella of *Il trecentonovelle*, where Dante, walking armed through the city, physically assaults a donkey driver. The unfortunate fellow was also singing Dante's poem, and after each line he would shout out a vulgar "arri!" in time with spurring the animal on.[63] The peasant is confused, stunned, and completely at a loss in the face of Dante's protest that he had not put that cry of "arri!" into his text. Not recognizing the poet, he turns and makes a crude gesture, "sticking out his tongue, and making the sign of the cunt."[64] Instead of running after such a vile man, one even socially lower than a blacksmith, screaming and throwing stones as anyone else would do, Dante combats him with carefully chosen words: "I would not give you one of mine for a hundred of yours."[65] Dante's response highlights the fact that well-chosen words could replace the sounds and stones of factional violence, that texts, and the textual culture they represented, were a bulwark against the lower classes, as much as laws that backed up urban policies of large-scale demolitions were a weapon against the elite. This allowed a certain portion of the Florentine *popolo* to claim a distinct status within the enfranchised classes, and Sacchetti shows how the control of texts was a means through which that conflict was enacted. Through two urban encounters by Dante, he dramatizes the double bind of a public space that was in the process of emerging in the fourteenth century. This space had to be kept clear of physical obstacles (arrogant knights), but it also had to be filled with rules and regulations to prevent unwanted deterioration (ignorant plebs).

The argument against the uncontrolled circulation of Dante's monumental vernacular epic through Florence in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries stands as a metaphor, I believe, for the more secretive textual practices of elite guildsmen that have been articulated by literary historian William Robins.[66] What he terms *mercantesca* textuality was not only the style that distinguished this writing from notarial, clerical, and humanist scripts but also the

fact that the "one responsible for the contents of the book" and the "one who wrote it" were "one and the same."[67] These texts represented a genre not derived from religious, legal, diplomatic, or scholastic models; they were the products of the aspirations of what Robins calls the "third estate," not aristocratic or religious, but secular and popular. They were the expression of an autonomous commercial sector that demanded a different documentary strategy designed to institutionalize the reduction of risk. Textual management became risk management through the careful recording of transactions. What necessitated this new technology of writing was the way that such an independent economic sector was less concerned with titles and deeds than with negotiability of debt, credit, and risk, which were managed by continuous calculations.[68] This transferability was analogous to an open and free network of streets, trade routes, and lines of communication between widely displaced buyers and sellers. Risk was minimized by spreading the obstacles and dangers associated with international trade among larger numbers of traders.

The development from account registers to *ricordanze* (diaries) and *libri di famiglia* (family books) produced an evolving series of genres of merchant writings that circulated within a certain field of autonomy, in which they managed and recorded commercial culture.[69] They were an expression of "the formal factors and cognitive processes that make human beings, individually and in groups, intervene in their societies by defining themselves as makers, users, and possessors of texts."[70] The succession of entries that made up the format of the account book seems to have encouraged the merchant to infuse it with elements characteristic of the *zibaldone*, the selection, transference, and recopying of texts—poetic, prosaic, devotional, or technical—where the "integrity of a written text was overruled by the flexibility of extracting and recombining any number of discrete items in order to meet new interests or obligations."[71] Therefore, the prerogative claimed to disassemble and recompose texts such as Dante's belonged to a textual practice at the core of merchants' identity as an autonomous class. This zone of textuality, as Robins makes clear, was constructed to exclude precisely those lower guildsmen whose debts were enforced by the Florentine merchant's tribunal, the *Mercanzia*. This institution functioned to conserve, protect, and limit access to this textual field of knowledge construction and exchange, manifested in the silence of the merchant's secret account book (*libro segreto*). This state of affairs points to the conflict between the verbal and the textual circulation of stories, at the point where they enter into the closed world of the powerful merchants who would have claimed Dante's text as part of their privileged discursive realm.

Publica Fama: Secrets, Rumors, Songs, and Stories

> *[E]ven when a private statement, such as a prayer or a vow of love, was shunted into verse form, it was thereupon converted into something public, into a gesture of public intention.*
>
> —LAURO MARTINES, *STRONG WORDS*

At the end of the fourteenth century, a paranoid Florentine government asked itself how to stop the circulation of a defamatory sonnet about their ally the king of France. Advisors recommended using the city's internal police, the Otto della Guardia (Eight of the Watch), to locate the author and mete out due punishment. In a similar situation in 1420, a Florentine ambassador

had to be sent to mollify an offended pope concerning a disparaging couplet making the rounds through the mouths of children. Such were the stakes involved with the aural and fragile apparatus of public honor, shame, and ridicule.[72] According to historian Lauro Martines, the circulating rhyme was a kind of memory capsule, which contained within it a condensed image of the past and whose purpose was to inflect thinking about the present. It cast the past into a memorable, usable form.[73] The "word spoken in public was likely to have a certifying value: it entered a zone" that constituted being as a social fact. In this zone, identities were "confirmed daily in their streets and marketplaces, or in government squares" through the semiotics of dress, visible signs, and audible words.[74] Such words heard on the streets were the aural, if unofficial, accompaniment to the city's notorious *pitture infamanti* (pictures of infamy) that were painted on the façades of public buildings. Enemies of the state were depicted with the symbols of shame, their visual images wedded to shameful words. Therefore, the circulation of public shame was played out in a dialogue between streets and architectural façades, between voices, words, and pictures. It was carried by the gestures and voices of moving bodies, diffused by the sound of bells, trumpets, and public proclamations, through the streets to reach active listeners in neighborhoods across the city, who received, stored, repeated, revised, and critiqued what they heard. As much as the movement of goods and people had to be regulated, facilitated, and policed in an emerging public domain, so too did the sounds that accompanied them. As one moved through the city, one heard the localized soundscapes that characterized corners, streets, and local neighborhoods. One heard confraternities singing lauds to the Virgin,[75] the repeated chants of itinerant scrap metal dealers,[76] and the sound of metal dumped in piles around the city. Heralds of death (*bannitori de' morti*) announced the passing of the living.[77] Lovers serenaded the objects of their desire at night,[78] while others sang obscene verses in the streets by day.[79] In rituals of social confrontation, stones echoed off walls and pavements, windows were banged on, while rivals clashed with sticks and clubs.[80] These sounds too were subject to the same kind of intense legislation, scrutiny, and general control because in any private vocal exchange the government feared defamatory speech and idle chatter. Magnates were prohibited from criticizing the city's leaders; no one could yell injurious insults while citizen forces were assembling for war, and jesters were forbidden to have a conversation in any of the communal palaces.[81] At the more local level, neighbors chatted, gossiped, and laughed, tradesmen bartered, insults were hurled, rumors were repeated, and stories were sung in the piazza.

Naturally, listening to the city was crucial for contemporary Florentines since it allowed them to comprehend what was going on in their city in a fundamental and profound way. If the sound of bells performed a major role in the creation and maintenance of temporal spaces and borders as a means of augmenting or refining concrete ones, then these sounds and words were often bent on dismantling and transgressing such concrete barriers and thresholds. Street-level anxiety over the acoustic transmission of information in urban space was not the exclusive preserve of the government, however. The merchant Paolo da Certaldo was acutely aware that one's own actions and words, let loose in streets and squares, were extremely difficult to control. He imagined the city as crawling with people hiding behind bushes and curtains, lurking around corners and listening behind walls. The immersive qualities of sound were a double-edged sword for someone who was in the business of maintaining business secrets.

Sound always threatened to dissolve the carefully laid boundaries between public and private space, between outside and inside, between official and popular versions of urban narratives. As a merchant who understood the importance of possessing proprietary information, he declared that secrets should be uttered softly, behind a very thick wall. He was well aware that concrete visual barriers, walls and corners, were never guaranteed to obstruct the sonic flow of information through space. Since walls inevitably sprang leaks, Paolo also realized that one could take advantage of the very nature of the piazza as open and accessible space by telling secrets right out in the middle of the square: "go and speak of your secret things in a piazza," he advises, "or in a meadow, or along the river, or in an open field, so that you see that someone is not so near that they hear you."[82] Paolo knew that one could also "redesign" the square's openness to create a zone of acoustic privacy by using the optimal visibility provided by open urban space. In the piazza, paradoxically, secrets could be revealed because one had a clear view of those persons within audible range. No one could hide in a piazza; everyone was equally exposed. That equalizing effect was a product of clear sightlines. The piazza allowed one to exploit the distancing nature of vision in order to control the omnidirectional radiation of sound and the spatial intimacy of one's voice. The transparency of the piazza, therefore, allowed Paolo to win back a certain domain of acoustic privacy and security that architectural barriers could not fully guarantee. He was grappling with the ambivalent nature of urban space and how the jumble of sounds—rumors, insults, lies, and truths—circulated so frenetically through Pucci's cacophonous market square.

Of course, the intimacy of hearing was precisely what made it suspect in terms of accuracy, objectivity, and truth. The repetitions of oral culture necessarily condensed, reordered, and regularized the content of stories, creating a public, metered form of verbal verse. Dino Compagni (c. 1255–1324), a civic chronicler who served as the third Standard-Bearer of Justice of the Florentine republic—the city's highest political office—acknowledged this problem right at the beginning of his account of the political strife plaguing the city around the turn of the fourteenth century. Writing years after the sequence of events, he declares his intention to write the "truth," which was, significantly, the product of what he saw *and* what he heard.[83] However, those things that he himself did not witness personally were subject to the distorting powers of desires, interests, and opinions, not all of which would have been honorable and trustworthy. Therefore, he states, he will appeal to the best possible report on such occasions.[84] He labels such reports with the term *maggior fama*, a species of the *publica fama* that was the collective judgment of the street and the piazza, what might from one perspective have been considered networks of gossip and rumors but might also, from a different point of view, be more akin to what might be called "crowd sourcing."

Those networks were constituted by *publica fama*, a phenomenon permeated by the relative dynamics of stability and instability to which successive reiterations of information are necessarily subject. The term *fama* incorporated the various ways in which communities constructed themselves socially by talking. *Fama* could be distinguished into two related but distinct forms of public knowledge. On the one hand, it referred to personal status and public trust, the common reputations that clung to individuals and groups. On the other, it referred to a common knowledge that coalesced into a more or less reliable form of truth. Although formed and maintained in the streets, *publica fama* could also be subsumed into the juridical practices of

the commune, where it took on the status of a publicly acknowledged truth. "The amorphous, fluid, and supposedly nonhierarchical talk of the streets and *piazze* becomes the stilted, arcane, and hierarchical (not to mention Latinized) talk of the courtroom or other legal arena or office."[85] *Fama* as knowledge and facts, therefore, had a double resonance and was twice constructed, once in urban public spaces and a second time in the legal space of the city's courts.

As a legislator, Compagni would have been familiar with the way information was always generated rhetorically, and known that extracting facts required that public talk be properly disciplined.[86] For the civic chronicler, *publica fama* provided a workable approximation of the truth because it represented a social practice—public speech—in which competing versions of events could filter out the most erroneous, fraudulent, and misremembered stories among those that tended to reiterate and confirm each other in public exchange and ultimately coalesce into a generally accepted version. Compagni knew that such information was a product of the urban spaces in which it circulated. Such spaces made up the middle zone between the city as a mechanism of perfect informational transparency and the city as a completely opaque zone of misrecognition and anxious confusion. Compagni believed, just as Antonio Pucci did, that the piazza had a mitigating effect on the extremes of misapprehension and that it could be relied on to produce a certain informational consensus. Figuring out exactly the *maggior fama* on any particular issue or person, therefore, constituted an important tool in one's arsenal. It required access to multiple sources and the ability to discern the relative status of some rumors and assumptions over others.

The author of the anonymous chronicle with which this chapter began assumed that the piazza facilitated this random consensus building and that it could be relied on to produce a certain informational accuracy. He was sensitive to the sonic registers of voices that carried, or miscarried, such information. Consequently, he stands as an extremely informative guide to navigating between the different kinds of narratives of *publica fama* that flowed through the city's streets and hovered tantalizingly in its squares. The chronicle is a compendium of sights and sounds. Its author takes account of all the changes and noises that surround him, trying to tease meaning out of urban space itself. He is a witness to the spectacle of political theater in the city's monumental square, but also has his ear tuned to the daily pulse of the public culture of the piazza, tapping into the vast reservoir of circulating murmurs, rumors, and whispers. Through phrases such as: "essi detto per Firenze" (it is said throughout Florence) and "dicesi questo dì" (today they are saying), the author evokes the lively dialogic, face-to-face exchanges that brought social space into being and breathed life into streets, squares, and workshops (figure 124). He is meticulous about citing his sources, so that we know whether information came from official letters or documents, popular rumors, or particular factions. He notes whether certain claims that are circulating are doubtful. In the words of his editors, he reveals a certain "tonality" of the city, with the piazza as the point of reference, which he evokes with words such as *bisbigli* (murmurs), *dicerie* (sayings), *favelari* (stories), and *boci* (voices) in order to navigate between various orders of information flows. He has a particular sensitivity to this flow of information, a certain ear for the subtleties of anticipations and expectations.[87]

Despite its collective character, public speech was a system of anonymous voices caught within discourses of power relations and defined by its own hierarchy of

FIG. 124 Baccio Baldini, *Mercury's Children*, a representation of the activities that took place in the public piazza. Fifteenth-century print. British Museum, London.

sounds; from barely audible whispers and murmurs of subversive speech, through the rumors and stories that contained the true and proper outlines of comments and reactions to events, to the increasingly fearful noise of insurrections in the making (*romori*).[88] This is contrasted with the meaningful silences imposed by a fearful government to avoid the low-level hum that could crescendo into outbreaks of unrest and violence when such exchanges achieved a critical sonic mass. In describing the politically tumultuous events in 1382, the author sums up these sounds as a *grande favellìo*,[89] a babbling buzz of competing voices, a confusing mass of whispers, mumblings, and murmurs. Related to *favellare*—the art of speaking well, of being able to express oneself, of conversing, and of telling stories—*favellìo* signified just the opposite. Instead of clarity of expression and exchange, it denoted confusion; instead of a single clear articulate voice, it was the product of collective chatter. The term articulated the dense web of information that chroniclers and diarists were constantly trying to unravel and evoked the sonic tenor that confronted and attempted to penetrate the thick walls of the city's communal offices for information beyond official rhetoric.

In this anonymous narrative, the sounds of the piazza are often juxtaposed with the official sounds of order and authority, underlining the unpredictability of the former and the instability of the latter. Amid the crises of 1382, a *favellìo* arose after armed members of the two recently created minor guilds moved en masse to release a condemned prisoner, while the Capitano threatened to resign.[90] This triggered a panic in the government that led directly to the agitated grumbling that the author hears in the city, and then finally to emergency measures in which the staff of governorship (*bacchetta*) was given back to the Capitano amid the celebratory sounds of the commune's trumpets.[91] In this case, the public chatter of the square was confronted and finally subdued by the sounds of order and authority.

It was at such times that one heard political slogans shouted out by armed citizens, whom the author describes as running through the city in order to prevent the *favellìo* from escalating into a *romore* as the government continued to execute its enemies.[92] This disciplining maneuver participated in the same economy of authority discharged by bells, the sounds radiating out from the center to the periphery, eliciting obedient citizens to then fill the central piazza for the most up-to-date news and to make demonstrations of

strength. That afternoon, as a pendant to the morning executions, the city created new knights of the commune in the piazza before reading out new government reforms on the *ringhiera*. The ritual enactment of urban pacification was then completed that evening by processions through the streets and squares, as the standard of the Guelf party was followed by the *popolo* through the city, with great rejoicing and no destruction of property.[93]

The official sounds of the commune, therefore, were used as weapons in trying to drown out or counter threatening voices in the piazza. After yet another execution in 1382, the murmur of insults was countered by trumpets signaling the completion of a *squittinio* (the scrutiny of a new pool of potential officeholders), but the bells at nones did not ring in order to keep the city in peace. Apart from the daily rhythms of the soundscape, the exchange between voices, instruments, and bells was an anxious game of moves and countermoves. Each tried to control, stop, or augment the flow of information through the city, while an extremely attentive audience intently analyzed each maneuver through the sounds the city was making. Rumors were constantly sparking fear in the authorities—"it was said . . . they wanted to start an insurrection and kill"[94]—who responded with their own modes of verbal expression: prayers and processions, laws read out to close shops,[95] alarms and trumpets sounded, and bells silenced. However, the clear expression of dissident demands of certain groups could also be articulated through the proper auditory channels. Disenfranchised citizens sent their demands to the palace, which were read out by the chancellor on the *ringhiera* to the assembled citizens.[96] When the author hears nothing on the street, he presumes there are no threats.[97] Silenced voices, especially at night, were comforting, in contrast to silent bells.

This anonymous author compiles a range of aural sources—official letters, circulating rumors, and menacing silences—in order to bind the acoustic topographies of the city together and construct a useful form of the truth. Despite the fact that the sound and the architecture of government were supposed to protect its secrets, they were both necessary to unite the city into a common social space in which *fama* circulated, to construct and guarantee the integrity of the city's walls and its body public. And the themes of some of the most inventive and localized urban literature would explore precisely that connection between bodies and space, between sound and architecture. Such stories circulated within a robust culture of public storytelling, in which they were embedded in real spaces and audiences and were active participants in directing the trajectory of the narratives that defined them as an urban community. They negotiated the terrain where one's reputation was constructed and maintained and where communal identities were formed. As such, they constituted important narrative building blocks of communal identities often framed within the circulating sounds of *publica fama*.

The City as Protagonist

What if, on the other hand, the malefactor was not a negligent regime or an obstinate set of social relations but a skillful manipulator of the soundscape of the *publica fama* itself? Although the city itself, its physical spaces and communicative networks, operated within the dialectical poles of the built environment as a matrix of perfect informational transparency and as a densely opaque medium of misrecognition and anxious confusion, it contained the capacity to lead its inhabitants toward a collective form of justice.

FIG. 125 View of the Rialto fish market (site of the former Ca' Quirini), across the Grand Canal from the *traghetto* stop. Photo by author.

In *Decameron* 4.2, the reader is taken to Venice, where bristling networks of information flows act as a powerful corrective medium that roots out fraudulent and foreign elements disrupting the city's degraded moral topography. The story dramatizes how architecture and urban space were never a fixed background upon which stories were hung, but active agents in shaping public meaning and identity.

In a trading city like Venice, lines of communication—literally, mouths that passed on information across urban space—penetrated public spaces through the interlaced networks of streets and canals. Access to information was crucial to making well-timed decisions about trade that spanned a large geographic area, involved numerous currencies, cultures, and languages, and demanded that information be as up to date as possible for profit to accrue in the hands of the merchant.[98] The exchange of this business information in Venice occurred, for the most part, around the Rialto markets, the site of daily exchanges of commodities and opportunities (figure 125). It was a place of feverish activity and deal making,[99] where one would come to find out the latest news of the city and places beyond. Filippo de Vivo has excavated the complex acoustic patterns that animated these commercial spaces, showing how both private and public interests staged a spatial game of constructing and infiltrating nodes of communication.[100]

On the other hand, the communicative networks of Venice expanding out from the Rialto were characterized by two independent systems.[101] Canals and streets literally overlapped each other, with bridges lifting one network over the other, in a way not possible in a city like Florence. Each facilitated the

different kinds of movements and connected public thoroughfares to institutional and private buildings at different points. Services often used streets and back doors, while canals were generally used for supplies and more ceremonial entrances. The street network was based on cellular parishes and, with the assistance of local bridges, provided faster internal neighborhood navigation,[102] while the canals were based on natural shipping channels and always connected the heart of Venice to the larger Mediterranean world. Both systems developed with relative independence but with complementary functions. Therefore, Venice provided a multilevel topographical matrix that allowed the circulation of competing messages that did not necessarily come up against each other, as they would have in Florence.

Boccaccio exploits this Venetian particularity in order to probe how the integrity of such communication networks could be maintained by those who used them, independent of the public institutions in charge of creating and maintaining them. It is just such networks that Frate Alberto, newly arrived from Imola, wants to exploit. He has a serious problem: his native city's social communication networks have become so saturated with his lies that his speech has become meaningless. His "shameful acts were so familiar to the Imolese, so much so that even when he was telling the truth, let alone lying, there was no one in Imola who would believe him."[103] In desperation, he moves to Venice, "the receptacle of every kind of filth."[104] There he joins the Dominicans and adopts a pretense of extreme piety, which serves to let him continue his shameful works. He quickly becomes a popular preacher, whose voice and gestures of affective display lure prominent Venetian families into his trust. He plays on the visual and aural modes of signification to create a reputation (*publica fama*) that conceals an inner sinful nature. The speed with which Alberto is able to become executor and trustee, confessor and councilor to many prominent men and women in the city demonstrates how he has managed to saturate Venetian discursive space with his feigned histrionic piety. Lines of communication, those mouths that pass on information across urban space, penetrating public spaces through the network of streets, are, however, just as they were in Imola, the method of his undoing. As David Wallace has remarked, it is the city-state of Venice itself that is the hero of the novella. It is "a social structure that is able to identify and uncover the 'thief, pander, swindler and murderer,'" correcting erroneous information.[105]

This occurs when Alberto's sexual desire leads him to devise a way to sleep with a certain Lisetta, home alone while her husband is away on business. Predisposed to shameful acts, he has convinced the vain Lisetta that the archangel Gabriel has fallen in love with her and naturally, therefore, wants to sleep with her. However, since angels lack a physical body that could perform such an act, Alberto has agreed to allow Gabriel to enter his own body in order to carry out the necessary deed. He thus succeeds in getting access to her bed: "Lady Lisetta was all fresh and soft, and she discovered that his ride was altogether different from that of her husband. He flew many times that night without his wings, which caused the lady to cry aloud with delight, and in addition, he told her many things about the glory of Heaven.[106]

Alberto's fall, however, begins when she lets slip her secret to one of her neighbors, as her vanity compels her to intimate how her beauty has rewarded her with angelic love and admiration. This immediately opens up a whole series of information conduits. The neighbor, ready to burst out laughing, manages to hold it in so that she can get more information.

After the conversation, however, she can hardly wait to recount the story. She finds her opportunity at a gathering with other women: "These women told the story to their husbands and to other women, and those to others, and in this way in less than two days Venice was filled with this story. But among the others to which this thing came to be heard were her relatives, who, without saying anything, decided to find this angel and find out whether he knew how to fly."[107]

The acceleration of this transfer of information is inscribed in the narration itself. Lisetta's initial exchange with the neighbor takes place over five paragraphs (about twenty-one lines). In only the next four lines, the neighbor tells the other women, who, in turn, spread the information to their husbands and other women in a single line of text. Finally, in the same sentence, a single clause reduced to two repeating pronouns ("e quelle a quell' altre" [and those to those others]), the telescoping narrative emulates the telescoping of the time it takes for the rapid spread of this information across the city. Ultimately, a story like the one let loose by Lisetta would end up in the Rialto markets, swirling around within the nexus of competing narratives, intermingling with discussions of trade and politics.[108] Lisetta's story begins in an exchange in private between her and a neighbor. It penetrates into other female domestic spaces and jumps across the threshold to the public world of men. In Venice, a city without defensive walls, information-bearing bodies traverse the networks of streets and canals, allowing information to jump from site to site and render architectural barriers porous.[109]

Venice is portrayed with a realism that demands a degree of familiarity. Boccaccio characteristically weaves together historical figures and spaces into a narrative that is all his own. He introduces the feast of the Annunciation held in Venice, to which he links Alberto's disguise as Gabriel. Lisetta's family name, Quirino, evokes one of the most noble and ancient mercantile families in the city. Their palace had occupied the site of the current Rialto fish market, and was partially destroyed in retaliation for their participation in a failed conspiracy against the government in the early fourteenth century (figure 125).[110] Therefore, the contemporary reader who had a certain familiarity with Venetian topography was invited to reflect on this architectural memory and its proximity to the Rialto markets.[111]

In the *Decameron*'s vision of Venice, misplaced sexual desire and religious treachery stand in for political fraud and the economic abuse of public space so feared by authorities. Voices, streets, and canals all collaborate in the creation of a discursive space that traps the lies of a philandering friar, allowing justice to be meted out in the public piazza.[112] Inevitably, the story of the angel Gabriel's love for Lisetta reaches her family, and they succeed in uncovering his ruse by catching him in her bedroom. But Alberto makes one last attempt to exploit the communication network of Venice by jumping into the Grand Canal and swimming away. Meanwhile, it is the free circulation of the story of Alberto's sexual improprieties at the Rialto market that leads to his downfall, because it is there that a certain upstanding man "heard talk about how the angel Gabriel had gone that night to enjoy himself with the lady Lisetta, and found there by her husband's family had, through fear, jumped into the canal, and that no one knew what became of him." As a result, after pulling a desperate Alberto from the water, he will soon realize whom he has brought into his home. Alberto had attempted, in his escape from Lisetta's bedroom, to literally ride Venice's information flows to his freedom. But the information that flowed through the canals traveled faster than

FIG. 126 Piazza San Marco looking toward the basilica of San Marco. Photo by author.

he could swim, so he rode those currents not to his escape, but to his final demise.

Moving from the Rialto, the site of business and exchange, to San Marco, the site of government and civic religion, Alberto meets his justice in the ritual space of Piazza San Marco (figure 126). Just before leading the unwitting friar there, the good merchant "sent someone to the Rialto to proclaim that whoever wanted to see the angel Gabriel, should go to Piazza San Marco."[113] In such an ideal context, the mechanism for diffusing public information appropriated the pure dynamics of speed. An enormous crowd assembles in the piazza to witness the conclusion of the story of the angel they had just heard proclaimed in the public square, now articulated in the official language of justice. Alberto is led to San Marco as a savage (*uom' selvatico*), smeared with honey, covered with feathers, a club in one hand, dogs attached to the other, a chain around his neck, and a mask on his face. He is about to take part in the traditional bear hunt (*caccia del orso*), where he will play the part of the baited bear.[114] This Venetian carnival ritual is exploited by the *buon'uomo* in order to expose Alberto's crimes, and the episode culminates between the columns on the Piazzetta, a traditional site of official justice meted out on the guilty body (figure 127). Tied up and exposed, Alberto is subjected to the screams and taunts of a crowd, outraged (and perhaps shamed by their own gullibility) as much by his hypocrisy and fraud as by his sexual malfeasance, "saying the most disgraceful and the foulest words ever hurled at any scoundrel, and on top of this one by one they began to throw garbage at his face."[115]

This novella assumes that information can travel unimpeded through disparate networks of speakers and across complicated spaces that involve specific gender divisions—though it is silent on questions of class. Alberto attempted to outwit the flow of information in a large and complicated city, but the overwhelming number of speakers and listeners that

FIG. 127 View of the piazzetta with the columns of justice from the clock tower. Photo by Raoul Mörchen.

participated in that urban dialogue quickly undermined his deceit. Venice acts as an ideal conduit that corrects flawed information. This is made possible by the interventions of so many different voices, whose collective cacophony creates an open, self-disciplining commons. Instead of relying completely on the city's forces of order, a communal dialogue of interested citizens eradicates deceptive messages. This story becomes less about Venice and more about how the city of the lagoon provided a model for understanding possible socio-spatial relations. It can be read as a framework for reimagining the city after the social and architectural collapse in the wake of the plague that preceded the writing of the *Decameron*. It shows how a well-functioning urban justice was located neither wholly with the state nor with the mob but in a symbiotic interaction of the two, facilitated by integrated urban spatial networks that could also take on an active role by correcting, confronting, or undermining an erring body public.

Compare Venice's role in this fictional tale to the actual plight of another Franciscan, Fra Michele, a Spiritual Franciscan who came to Florence to serve the needs of the community. Although Florentines were generally sympathetic to this heretical branch of mendicants, whose radical adherence to poverty dominated their theology and deeply offended the rest of the order, not to mention the papacy, Michele was arrested, tried, condemned, and executed in 1389. Richard Trexler has already pointed out how the author of an "eyewitness" account, a supporter of Michele, recasts the narrative of Michele's trial and execution as a reenactment of Christ's Passion.[116] In this version, the crowd tries to force the condemned to acknowledge his errors and save his soul, but by the end of this increasingly agitated aural exchange, the crowd is not at all sure whether justice has, in fact, been carried out. Lying somewhere between pure invention and reality, the chronology of this event unfolds through the anguished voices of the crowd competing for authority with the placid resolve of the condemned friar. What we hear is the sound of those voices desperately challenging the friar's resolve through the symbolic resonances of the spaces through which he is led toward his execution.

The spatial symbolism of the narrative begins with Fra Michele's exit from the tribunal in the

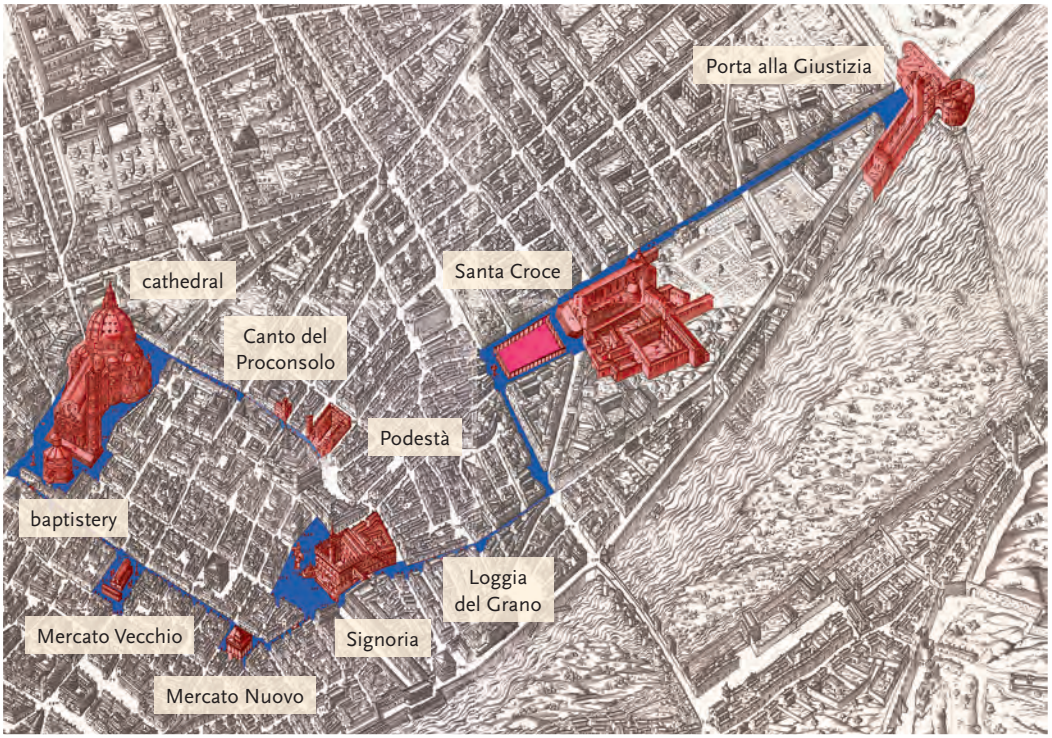


FIG. 128 Fra Michele's way of the cross, recording the route and sites mentioned in the chronicle of his trial and execution. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

Palace of the Capitano: alone, wearing a partially unbuttoned tunic, barefoot, head bowed, chanting the holy office, and looking very much like a Christian martyr. He moves with slow, steady steps as he begins his journey through the city to the site of his death.[117] At successive places throughout, the crowd makes repeated appeals for him to reject his "heretical" beliefs so that he can be absolved by and recognize the legitimacy of the urban community that is trying to purge him. They implore him to save himself, telling him that he should not want to die, and that he can be forgiven for his sins.[118] But he will do no such thing. When he reaches the Canto del Proconsolo, there is a great swell of noise from the crowd, and several of his brothers in the crowd ask him to pray for them (figure 128).[119] As he makes his way across the spiritual and religious topography of the city, the narrator makes specific reference to the collective exhortations of the crowd. In each case, what the crowd says and how Fra Michele responds—with words or silence—bear directly on the nature of the setting. Their words animate buildings, bringing the symbolic force of the city's concrete institutions to bear upon the condemned. At the cathedral he is implored to believe in the pope, at the baptistery the crowd begs him to repent and save his life, and at the bishop's palace he is admonished for refusing to ask someone to pray for his salvation.[120] In these exchanges, the author makes the meaning, function, and activities of the site the central elements in the story's symbolic development. The cathedral was the seat of papal power, the baptistery was the place where Florentine

sins were cleansed and citizenship forged, and the bishop's residence represented the church as intercessor between the faithful and their salvation. For each of these spatially specific cries from the crowd, Fra Michele offers a response that reinforces this spatial choreography: at the cathedral he counters that it was *they* who had made a god of this pope, at the baptistery that *they* should flee from sin, and at the bishop's palace that he wants *all* faithful Christians to pray on his behalf.[121]

As the procession proceeds, Fra Michele takes hold of the city's secular spaces and turns them against the crowd. At the Mercato Vecchio, the city's commercial heart, he exhorts them to repudiate hell. At the Mercato Nuovo, the site of international banking and trade, he castigates them for usury and dishonorable mercantile transactions. At the Palace of the Priors, the fortress of official secrets, he reminds them that every Christian is obligated to tell the truth. At the grain market, a zone of prostitution, he condemns the women at the windows and the men in the square for gambling and fornication. When a single voice accuses him of being a martyr for the devil, he reminds the crowd, amid their cries, that it was the *voice of the people* that crucified Christ and Saint Peter.[122] The city, therefore, is imagined as the theatrical protagonist in a drama where it plays a major symbolic role.

At this point, the collective cries for justice begin to turn in upon themselves. Instead of the city facilitating the desire of the people to bring justice to the heretic, *at every location* Michele compels the city to expose the crowd to the reflection of its own sins. At the Franciscan church of Santa Croce, Michele is shown the image of Saint Francis, which he venerates even as he rebukes his conventual brothers for swearing fealty to a rule they betray by exiling those, like him, who try to observe it.[123] By the time he reaches the gate of justice, the crowd begins to lose control over their dialogue as the gate transforms Florence into an image of Jerusalem, in which they are unwittingly cast as the enemies of Christ. Desperately they declare that he is not Christ, that he is not dying for them, and that he is not among the pagans. Responding to his claim that he is dying for the truth, they declare that *they* decide what the truth is, not him. Someone asserts that he is dying as a suicide, to which he proclaims that *he* is not killing himself, but that *they* are killing him. As he nears the site of justice, some of his supporters begin to make themselves heard, imploring him to remain strong. But the author cannot hear Michele's response, as his voice is drowned out by the crowd, whose collective voice has now degenerated into a confused and nervous chatter (*uno grande favellìo*).[124] At the place of execution, just outside the city gates, the crowd begins to wonder in desperation just what role it is actually playing. The narrative rhetoric had led the community from collective exhortation to redemption toward a role as enemies of the faith.

The narrative invention of the author to use this itinerary to transform the conventional route of Florentine justice through the city into a path of martyrdom linked to the passion of Christ demonstrates his intimate understanding of the symbolic meanings embedded in Florentine topography and how these meanings emerged through a vocal exchange. Such a transformation was made possible by the way in which the succession of ritual encounters within specific urban spaces in Florence could import the power of Jerusalem's sacred topography and set the stage for symbolic biblical reenactments.[125] In the case of Fra Michele, the city offered up a series of standard topoi, sites loaded with historical meaning that set the parameters within which an urban narrative could

emerge as a critique of the crowd that belonged to it, that could do nothing but conform to it, even as it was frantically trying to deny it. This urban narrative also demonstrates how the carefully delineated topographies of Florence—of economics, government, and church—could be integrated into a series of echo chambers that revealed how justice was the product of the movement of bodies, the exchange of words, and the ineluctable performances of spatially embedded roles.

In practice, no city could be as audibly transparent and efficient as Boccaccio's vision of Venice. However, as Michele's story reveals, in the transactions between official justice, represented by the sound of a bell and its popular confirmation in the competing voices of the crowd, the operation of justice was less about the punishment meted out on the body of an errant friar than about the continual aural construction, maintenance, and sanctification of a well-functioning community. The anxious verbal exchange between Michele and the crowd relies on the ways in which a community's identity was deeply embedded in the architectural topography of the city. And just as the official mechanisms of justice are grinding toward Michele's death, his itinerary is transformed into an ambivalent landscape of sin and redemption. In this landscape, in these very places, Florentines heard the echoes of their own transgressions, reminding them that they were caught within a much larger urban dialogue in which they were compelled to reflect on the nature and practice of constructing, maintaining, and participating in a fair and just society.

Sonic Discord, Urban Disorder

5.

In a 1984 article, Richard Trexler follows the movement of flags in the streets of Florence during the revolt of the wool workers in the summer of 1378.[1] The Ciompi revolt (*tumulto dei Ciompi*), as it would come to be known, was a watershed moment in both the history and the historiography of Florence, and it provided Trexler with a moving scenography of meaningful images through which he was able to trace subtle but crucial shifts in the balance of power between competing groups.[2] As the culmination of a series of conflicts between elite and lower guildsmen, as well as the disenfranchised wool workers themselves (Ciompi), the Ciompi revolt entered into a long tradition of struggles seeking to make the guild system of government more popular in representation and open up more offices to the lower ranks. Added to this was the demand from the Ciompi and their lower-guild allies for the right to form three new guilds that enfranchised thousands of hitherto alienated workers. The historical events surrounding the Ciompi revolt—those who participated in it, the changing allegiances that drove its brief moment upon the stage, and the aftermath of the regime that it left in its wake—have been the subject of intense historical debate.[3] Central to this debate is the relative radical or conservative nature of the revolution's program and what groups—aristocrats, minor guildsmen, or the Ciompi themselves—were actually directing the reforms. However, what is important for my purposes is that the Ciompi, who had no legal right to act as a corporate entity, demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of both the visual and acoustic communication systems set up by the regime. They also understood that appropriating, inflecting, and reorganizing these

systems, rather than simply ignoring or negating them, was necessary, if not entirely sufficient, to bring down the current regime and reorder it according to a more inclusive political ideology.

As the revolution lurched from sudden success to tense negotiations and finally to betrayal, the location and movement of flags—representing guilds, neighborhoods, and the commune—allowed the Ciompi to generate legitimacy, form allegiances, gather support, and lay claim to the spaces of government. Trexler's analysis shows how representations "come alive in revolt and lose the dead scholarly skin that has them only 'stand for' something else."[4] He treats flags not as mere images but as active signs deployed by revolutionaries as necessary weapons in their strategic arsenal. Although Trexler does not visualize the complex movements and battles between competing images, his essay provides the historian with a valuable tool for investigating the complex interplay of images and space and how important they are for understanding the sequence of events at moments of extreme crisis.

In 1993, Alessandro Stella published an in-depth study of the spaces of Ciompi labor and the men who toiled there. Although Niccolò Rodolico had pointed out that Ciompi leaders were punished specifically for ringing bells of several churches independently of the bells of the *popolo* and the commune of Florence, Stella was the first to suggest that the Ciompi's use of bells was more systematic than a simple act of acoustic subversion.[5] Against the meticulous regulations, in which each bell had prescribed functions, the revolutionaries developed a communication system, based on the exchange of parish bells, that skirted the authority of the three great sonic powers of the city: the church (cathedral), the judicial courts (Bargello), and the commune (Palazzo Vecchio). Stella's map of this exchange, which includes the number and movement of the revolutionary groups around the city, is the direct inspiration for pursuing Stella's apprehension of the aural dimensions of the revolt (figure 129).[6]

Although they appear at the end of this study, Trexler's and Stella's novel insights and innovative methods of looking and listening to the past underlie the entire trajectory of this investigation of the noisy Renaissance. They show that taking account of the mobile and acoustic semiotics of the city and mapping them out in space unveils vital aspects of how contemporaries understood the shifting symbolic dimensions of the built environment which they had to interpret on the fly, interpretations of an urban iconography that had very real and consequential implications. The following, therefore, represents the results of that closer look at the sounds of revolt in Florence in the summer of 1378. By actively appropriating the acoustic dimensions of streets and squares, the Ciompi only intensified and refocused the means inhabitants always used to map out lines of communication, discover limits and borders, and imagine spaces transformed.

The Sound of Revolt

The Ciompi revolt was the dramatic climax of a series of political crises that dominated the Florentine summer of 1378. Although minor guildsmen and some patricians and *popolani* took part, the core of the uprising that led to the fall of the government and the installment of a new, even more popular regime was made up of large numbers of the city's disenfranchised wool workers. Known as the Ciompi since the early fourteenth century, they emerged that summer as an organized revolutionary force that demanded its own guild privileges and a permanent place at the helm of the Florentine political apparatus. But before

FIG. 129 A reconstruction of Alessandro Stella's map of the moment when the Ciompi rang their bells to announce their revolt. Blue squares indicate the churches whose bells were rung to start the revolt. Yellow circles indicate where and in what numbers the Ciompi assembled. Overlaid by the author from Davidsohn's topographic reconstruction of medieval Florence.

they burst onto the scene, a nervous government was already dealing with political crises that were intensely scrutinized by nervous Florentines.

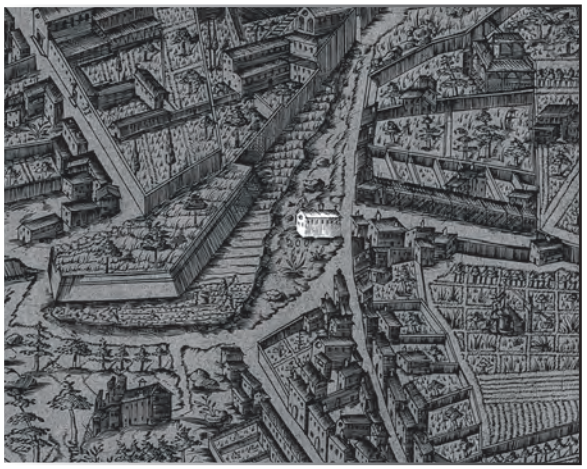
That the city's carefully constructed topographic harmonics were already buckling under the conflicts became dramatically apparent during an uneasy silence on July 1, 1378. The new priors, as they did every two months, entered the Palazzo Vecchio to take up their posts. But on this occasion, as observers noted with intense foreboding, the communal bells did not ring as they customarily did, and no ceremonial rituals took place on the *ringhiera*.[7] Instead of sights and sounds, there was silence and invisibility, as the swearing in of the new government took place not in public view but shielded behind the thick walls of the palace. The proper symbolic representation of civic authority was beginning to break down, and walls were beginning to dematerialize.

The Ciompi broke this silence on July 20. Niccolò degli Oriuoli, a clockmaker, was in the tower of

FIG. 130 Santa Maria del Carmine, the first church to ring for the Ciompi revolt, depicted in a modern reproduction of the late fifteenth-century "chain map" of Florence. Photo by author.

FIG. 131 San Frediano, the second bell, depicted in a modern reproduction of the late fifteenth-century "chain map" of Florence. Photo by author.

FIG. 132 San Piero Gattolino. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.



the Palazzo Vecchio when he heard the tortured cries of a certain Simoncino, who had been arrested amid circulating reports of a brewing insurrection. Under torture, Simoncino, one of the Ciompi's most radical leaders, confessed that he knew about the revolt, which was planned for the very next day. Niccolò, realizing that his whole neighborhood might be compromised, dropped his tools, rushed across the river to his home in San Frediano, and armed himself.[8] He reemerged on the streets of his neighborhood and began desperately shouting to his comrades to do the same: "to arms, to arms; the priors are committing murder . . . arm yourselves, you enraged people, if not you will all be dead!"[9] It was at this point, according to the chronicle, that Nardo di Camaldoli entered the church of Santa Maria del Carmine and began to ring its bells.[10] This set off a chain reaction of responses from bell towers around the city, from San Frediano, San Piero Gattolino, and San Niccolò. Across the Arno, the bells of Ognissanti joined in the alarm, followed by those of Santo Stefano a Ponte, San Pier Maggiore, and finally San Lorenzo (figures 130–38).[11] From tower to tower, from bell to bell (*di campana in campana*), all of Florence was engulfed in the sound of the alarm as the insurrection was under way.

In light of the complex rules, regulations, and customs that surrounded the ringing of bells, outlined in chapters 2 and 3, this relay of acoustic signals

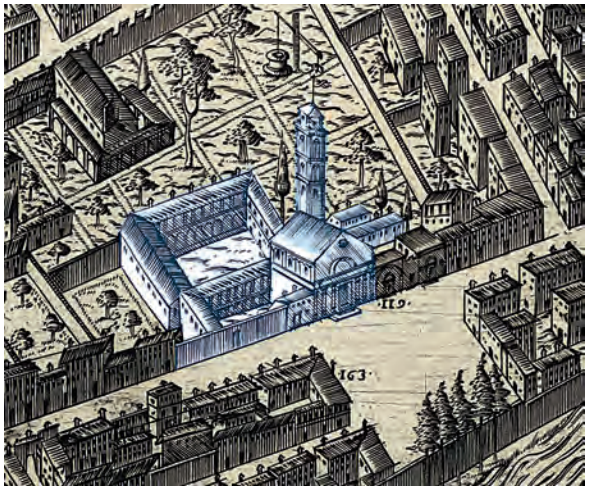


FIG. 133 (*top left*) View of the bell tower of San Niccolò from the Piazzale Michelangelo. Photo by author.

FIG. 134 (*bottom left*) The church of Ognissanti, the first bell to ring across the river from the Oltrarno. Author's overlay on the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

FIG. 135 (*above*) View of the façade of the church of Santo Stefano a Ponte from via Por Santa Maria. Photo by author.

FIG. 136 The church of San Pier Maggiore before its destruction in the eighteenth century. Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

FIG. 137 The church of San Lorenzo, depicted in a modern reproduction of the late fifteenth-century "chain map" of Florence, shown after its fifteenth-century reconstruction but before the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century additions. Photo by author.

represented a profound intervention into the city's soundscape, breaking the axial coordinates that were emphatically focused on the central towers and squares and overturning the proper one-way direction of officially sanctioned messages. The sounds that erupted that morning directly confronted the bells at the heart of the regime's power to communicate, generating an enclosing circle of sound that penetrated deep into the city's core. If the three institutions of the city—church, judiciary, government—had bells large enough to envelope the entire city, then the Ciompi had internalized that acoustic representational system—a system from which they were expressly excluded—in order to construct an effective means by which they could relay messages from one outlying neighborhood to another. As a politically disenfranchised community, the Ciompi had no representational rights within the symbolic systems at work within the city. They were excluded from any kind of corporate representation, such as processing under their own banner; from charitable patronage; from any form of activity that would have required the display of arms and thus legitimized their participation in civic life. Voiceless and invisible, they fully understood that such proscriptions were meant to banish them from the city's system of circulating signs and symbols.[12] It was within this context that they were able to deploy their newly created acoustic identity against the apparatus of authority, bypassing entirely the aural transmitters at the center.[13] As the message was relayed from one campanile to another, a wall of sound surrounded the center of power.

The importance and meaning of ringing bells to start a revolt cannot be overestimated in a culture in which those bells and towers were an integral part of urban experience. Florentines had to attune themselves to subtle changes in tone and rhythm.

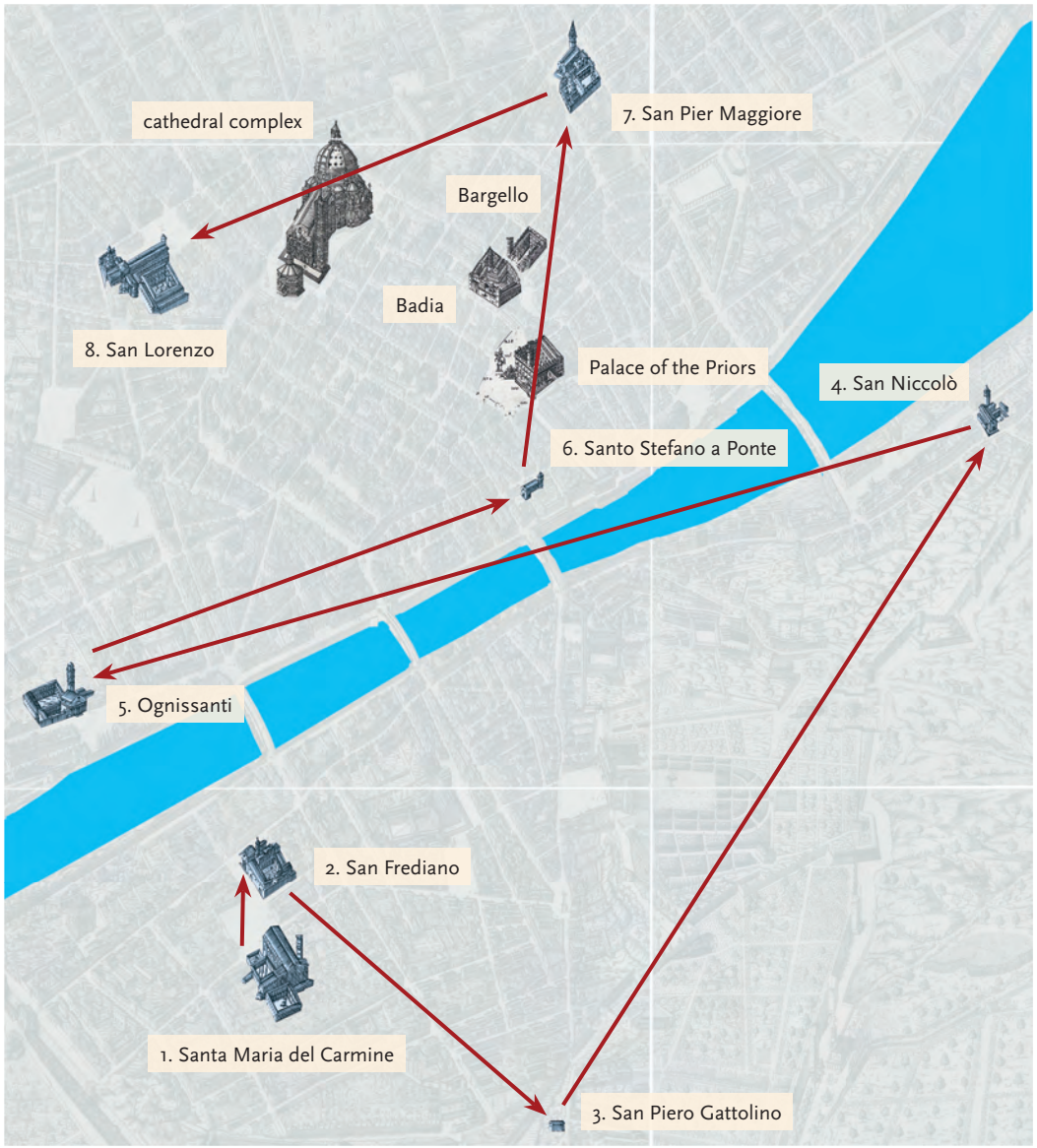


FIG. 138 The sequence of bells that rang to begin the Ciompi revolt on July 20, 1378. Note that the sound of revolution built up momentum in the Oltrarno before crossing the river to Ognissanti, where the relay of rings then crossed through the centers of government and church in a zigzag movement, directly challenging the heart of the acoustic regime and preparing the way for the thousands of men who would assemble there. Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

As chapter 2 has made explicit, bells marked the time of the church, its offices, and its calendar. They called the religious to prayer, councils to gather, government to order, and citizens to arms. They marked the beginning of the day, the time of labor, the cessation of labor, and the beginning of night. They announced foreign events, welcomed dignitaries, accompanied mobilized troops, and mourned death and excommunication.

Visually, the image of the medieval city was often a conglomeration of bell towers, family towers, and

FIG. 139 A representation of factional fighting in Florence, from the illustrated manuscript of Giovanni Villani's *Nuova Cronica* by the workshop of Pacino di Buonaguida, late fourteenth century. Bib. Apostolica Vaticana, MS Chigi L VIII.296, fol. 70r.

the towers of city gates. Such structures had always played a fundamental role in all kinds of spatial conflicts, whether they were used as refuge or for battle, destroyed in a new ethic of urban planning, or built to protect the city. Now the sound that they made had been turned upon the regime that had placed so much importance in controlling those sounds. This is made clear in an image, taken from the only illustrated fourteenth-century manuscript of Giovanni Villani's chronicle of Florence, which depicts a battle between family and communal towers (figure 139). It demonstrates how the city could be reduced to a configuration of such structures, an image much more readily presented by pictorial conventions than the horizontal topographies plotted by the textual practices analyzed in chapter 4.

A late fourteenth-century fresco in the ceiling of Orsanmichele depicts Saint Anne holding a model of the city. She became an official patron protector of Florence after the Florentine *popolo* had chased the French nobleman Walter of Brienne from the city on her feast day in 1343. Although he had been invited to bring social order to the warring factions of the *popolo*, he was soon hated for his tyrannical lordship and his organization of the Ciompi into city militias in 1343. Anne's image, therefore, could visibly demonstrate

FIG. 140 Saint Anne, from the fresco cycle of female saints on the northeast vault of Orsanmichele. Saint Anne became a protector saint of Florence when the *popolo* ousted the duke of Athens from Florence on her feast day in 1342. Here she is depicted holding the city in a protective embrace. Photo by author.

FIG. 141 Taddeo di Bartolo, San Gimignano holding his city in a protective embrace, c. 1391. Detail of the San Gimignano Altarpiece, Museo Civico, San Gimignano. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, N.Y.

how the hierarchical relationship between the civic church and the commune, on the one hand, and the outlying periphery, on the other, was subsumed into a dialogue only between those architectural elements—towers and walls—that stood in for those authorities (figure 140). In the chronicle image, the emphasis is on the unruly factional conflicts that attacked from the periphery, while the Orsanmichele image denies that periphery in a context in which the recapturing of control of the city's center is celebrated. Reducing the city to the profile of its most important monuments was, of course, a pictorial convention, but it

was also a conscious choice among several available options. More complex and complete versions of the fourteenth-century commune exist in manuscript (figures 57, 141). The former shows the chaos of towers that marked the skyline of Lucca, while the latter presents a vertical hierarchy in which all elements of the city of San Gimignano take part. In the Florentine image of Saint Anne, the city has been reduced to its ideal minimalist political order, effacing the unwanted elements of the periphery; it thus represents exactly the kind of city that Saint Anne was supposed to guarantee as protector of the city against the tyranny of both foreign princes and lower-class workers.[14] It differs from the Bigallo fresco of the Madonna della Misericordia, discussed in chapter 1 (figure 12), where the dense topography of towers and buildings is barely contained within the walls. Thus, subtle differences in the way the city was represented reflected a range of ideal visions of the city, but what always is central to these images is the vertical profile of the city's most important towers, the central nodes in the acoustic messaging system that the Ciompi had reconfigured to sound the voice of political protest.

The proper functioning of bells had to respect the visual hierarchy of the city's configuration of towers. The proper lines of communication were from center to periphery and from cathedral and town hall to parish bells. This organization defined the spatial limits and daily practices of *localized* communities, which were subordinate and organized around parish bell towers, such as that of Sant'Ambrogio (figure 109). Such local bells defined the spatial limits of a neighborhood, a familiar territory set in relation to others. They gathered around them a community of souls who were connected to each other by this aural experience.

As chapters 2 and 3 have made clear, bells had been an important instrument of the *popolo* in their campaign against nobility since the thirteenth century, and it is my contention that this taught the Ciompi how to use the bells effectively in the service of political struggle. The sense of acoustic threat brought on by the encircling bells that morning is suggested in another eyewitness account. The writer of an anonymous letter describes how he was in the piazza as a scuffle broke out with armed guards around the hour of terce. He can say neither what nor how, but all of a sudden he heard cries of "Siege, siege!"[15] At that very moment he also heard bells ringing in alarm, which he tries to name in sequence: from Camaldoli, near the church of Santa Maria del Carmine; San Piero Gattolino; San Giorgio; several churches in via San Gallo; Sant'Ambrogio; and "many other places" (figure 142).[16] This was the sound of the revolt heard from the center of the city, and although this witness did not correctly identify the source of each successive ring, he was able to cognitively map the general directional flow that enveloped the city in a very real acoustic siege. This is a useful comparison to the official register extracted by torture from Simoncino (figure 138). Even though the authorities had been warned of the actual sequence by Simoncino, the intensifying chorus still managed to immediately instill the experience of a menacing aural siege in the ears of terrified listeners at the center of the city. And the collective ringing of so many bells could only announce the gathering of large crowds simultaneously across the city.

It was in these outer localized soundscapes, connected through and made universal by their collective ringing, that the Ciompi found access to a corporate voice and countered the official sounds of the city. This suggests that parish bells, and those who managed them, must have had a more intimate and responsive relationship to the communities they served than the strict hierarchy established by

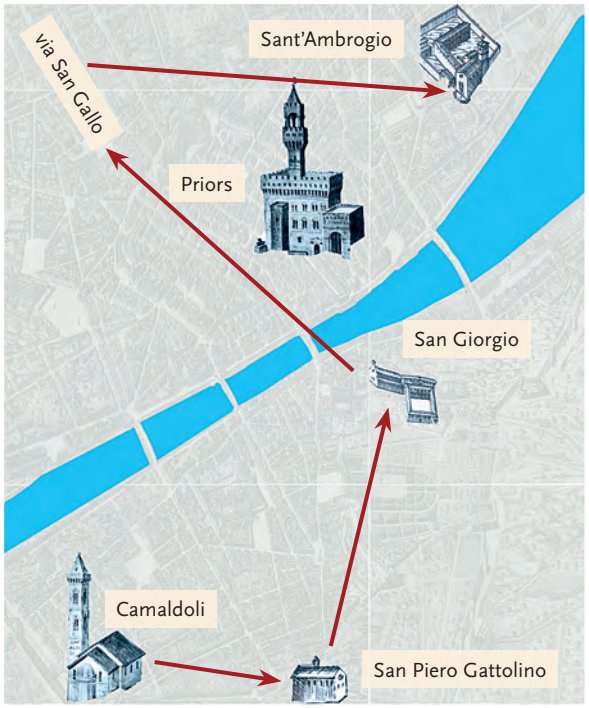


FIG. 142 Earwitness account of the Ciompi bells on July 20, 1378. Although the witness names only one church "correctly," with respect to the information extracted by the government through torture, the spatial sequence across the margins and then the center of the city remains remarkably accurate. Compare to figure 138. Author's overlay of the Bonsignori map, 1584 (detail), Harvard College Library, Harvard Map Collection.

church regulations. It was here, at the level of local communities, that a history of resistance lay open to the Ciompi. They may have remembered when the monks of the Badia, as described in chapter 1, rang their bell to protest the imposition of taxes on their properties in 1307, calling the *popolo minuto* to arms against the government tax collectors, an episode that led to the partial demolition of their bell tower. In 1344, four inhabitants of the town of Lastra, just outside Florence, were punished for ringing their bell as the bishop passed through the town on his way back from Rome. They did this not, as would have been customary, to welcome him on his way through the parish (*a distesa*), but in alarm, to raise bands of armed men to assault him (*ad stornum*, i.e., *a stormo*) for all the suffering he had caused them.[17] Therefore, the Florentine soundscape offered aural precedents for the Ciompi, who were able to draw on a familiar idiom in order to confront the regime precisely at the neighborhood level, where the relations between community and architecture were most intimate. Linked together, these sounds gave them a collective voice, allowing them to communicate across neighborhoods and to bypass conventional hierarchies. The subversive nature of such actions is made clear by the legal proceedings that were held in the wake of the defeat of the Ciompi later that summer. Leaders were condemned and punished precisely for ringing the bells of several churches *independently* of those of the *popolo* and the commune of Florence.[18] In other words, they had transgressed the proper representational order of the acoustic regime. In doing so, they had instilled fear and confusion while simultaneously inscribing their collective identity, however terrifying it might be, indelibly into the soundscape of the city. Bells could be made to speak for and legitimate a whole range of communities because they contained within them an acoustic power that was grounded in but transcended the laws and customs of this particular urban context.[19]

So on that day, as the bells called the Ciompi to action, the sheer numbers gathering in four major piazzas around the city horrified observers—four hundred at Santo Stefano a Ponte, eight hundred at San Pier Maggiore, one thousand at Santo Spirito, "innumerable" men at San Lorenzo.[20] This mass body would drive the next sonic assault on the architecture of power as the Ciompi assembled in the Piazza della Signoria. According to Alamanno Acciaioli, who, as a

FIG. 143 Piazza and monument: the palace of the commune (Palazzo Vecchio) seen from the square, the most striking image that Florentines would have had of the republic that represented them. Photo by author.

prior elected on July 1, 1378, witnessed the revolt from inside the palace, the crowd in the square wanted their petitions for reforming the government turned into law.[21] If accepted, these demands would incorporate thousands of disenfranchised laborers into the structures of political power and apportion them offices based not on their rank within the guild system but on the sheer number of their members.[22]

Voices in the Square

Piazza and monument: the Piazza della Signoria and the Palazzo Vecchio constituted an ensemble through which public and private knowledge were negotiated (figure 143). Such negotiations were caught up in the relationships between silence and audibility, things hidden and visible, secrets and communication. The piazza and the monument it framed enacted just such a reciprocal relationship. The role of the palace was to mask the deliberations of the regime, to contain its secrets, and to broadcast official messages only through surrogates, the voices, trumpets, and bells

FIG. 144 View of the Piazza della Signoria from the Palazzo Vecchio. Photo by author.

that communicated to the crowd in the square below. On July 21, 1378, that crowd, armed textile workers, artisans, and guildsmen, had burst dramatically upon the soundscape and was demanding a response to its demands. Having been called to council, Acciaioli recorded later that the assembled priors were "breathless and agitated as much by the noise as the intense summer heat, and not being able to do anything else, deliberated and submitted the said petitions to their advisory colleges where they were passed."[23]

Acciaioli's description of the events provides an extraordinary narrative, from a privileged perspective inside the palace, of the direct relationship between sound, architecture, and the collapse of an institution of authority (figure 144). The next morning, he writes, the bell sounded to convene the council of the commune for a second reading of the Ciompi petitions. The *popolo minuto*[24] returned to the square and began to make so much noise that no one inside the palace could actually hear what those demands were, and so they were powerless to do anything but immediately approve them.[25] When a terrified prior was seen attempting to flee from the palace, the angry crowd once again let loose a colossal cry, their shrieks again reaching the heavens, demanding that all the priors step down from their positions and leave the palace.[26] The priors remaining inside were stunned, since they believed that their colleague had descended to inform the crowd of their decision and to guard the door against them. Their sense of betrayal was marked by their bodily gestures, which revealed the dissolution of their psychological resolve: they wrung their hands, wailed helplessly, and beat their faces in complete exasperation.[27] But nothing would stop the

noise of the crowd, which sensed its sonic power and its ability to make walls and bodies tremble.[28] The priors, abandoned and not having a clue what to do, frantically ran about in all directions looking for a way to escape.[29] Those remaining finally left the palace, along with all the Gonfalonieri (standard-bearers of the militias) and the Twelve Good Men (an advisory college), giving the keys to the taverner Calcagnino before they too went home. "And so one could say," concludes Alamanno, "that the happy, peaceful, and good state of the city was lost."[30] Two days of sustained screaming had successfully drowned out the ability of the councils to conduct their business. The noise created a combination of physical barrier and psychological threat. By filling the piazza with both bodies and voices, the victorious revolutionaries succeeded in controlling the piazza and winning the city.

Robert Fredona has shown how the petitions that were drawn up by the would-be revolutionaries were actually a collaborative effort that included members of the city's war council as well as the syndics of the wider guild community, or *popolo*, that is to say, a large cross section of the Florentine political community, along with members of the *popolo minuto* and the Ciompi proper.[31] It was an act of political compromise that carried elements of political and economic reform as well as personal protections and retribution for crimes committed by both allies and enemies. In other words, it was a series of demands predicated on immediate fears and grievances rather than a more global declaration of labor rights. However, the fact that the Ciompi demanded and won the right to organize themselves into a guild and take part in collectively negotiating power—in John Najemy's notion of Florence's particular governing ethos—meant that they understood the concept of liberty as it was articulated within the universalizing rhetoric of the Florentine republic, as well as in the concrete culture of conflict, compromise, and consensus that characterized the corporatist politics of the city's long republican experiment.[32] "Liberty" had a definite sound and a particular image in Florence; it did not, as Trexler reminds us, simply "stand for something" while "real" politics was negotiated behind such signs. Instead, caught between universal ideal and local manifestations, "liberty" was always in the process of generation by the transactions between images and sounds: in motion, at play, in conflict. Its status at any given time, its appropriation by any given group, and its dissemination by the events of the Ciompi revolt were continually in the making.

By the time the crowd filled the square, this collaboration between various members of Florentine society, all of whom had various reasons, both noble and vindictive, for joining the insurrection, was transformed temporarily into a single voice of protest against those who were inside the palace and could barely hear anything else. Despite the violent disorder and targeted acts of arson that had characterized the events leading up this moment, in this brief moment they were, in fact, mitigated by the power of a united crowd that was becoming aware of an alternative, collective acoustic power derived from the stones that surrounded them. It terrified the remnants of the regime who remained inside the palace. This was just the kind of messy association that Pucci praised in the daily chaos of the market square, where spatial relations transformed everyone into a participant and made them aware of their collective, if ambivalent, potential to bring about massive urban change.

Such a range of associations brought together a variety of urban communities and suggests that the Ciompi did not possess a fully developed revolutionary consciousness that might have led them into a

radical political isolation. Instead, they were intensely aware of the nature of their oppression as a group and appealed to the inclusive ideology of Florentine guild politics. The sound of bells was one such idiom of common expression, to which they added the one image that had the capacity to offer them a foothold in this system of corporate membership. A generation earlier, they had been given such a corporate identity by Walter of Brienne.[33] He had organized them into festive military brigades, and the Ciompi, whose definition and origins remain somewhat vague, received the sign of the archangel Gabriel, whose image they deployed not to dissolve but to become part of the city's urban semiology, its culture of signs and civic ideals which the regime claimed to represent. Such claims involved republican liberty, guild-based political representation, proportional representation in government bodies, and control over one's labor, all of which were symbolized by the flags that designated these corporate groups. Nevertheless, the people who had drawn up the petitions and gathered in the square were willing, from the beginning, to compromise in order to achieve their goals. This is true even though some would later be compelled to betray the more radical elements of the Ciompi, who knew they would be the first to be sacrificed.[34] In any event, while they were able to assemble under the flag of the angel carrying a sword and the red cross of the Florentine *popolo*, they were participating in political strategies that Florentines understood and accepted as legitimate.

However, the search for a coherent political program in advance seems to contradict the lessons that Pucci tells us about Florentine society and politics, which were developed through a dialogue with the historical ideals of Florentine liberty and justice, as well as the demands of contemporary circumstances. It was a political game in which the radicals were, for better or worse, the ones pushed aside when the piazza ceased to function as an inclusive public space. As Pucci has taught us, participating meant getting dirty, accommodating unsightly or unwanted neighbors, at times getting knocked about, ridiculed, and even cheated. However, the liberating potential of the square remained, and at this moment was set in motion. Although social difference was maintained in public space, that space also created bodily proximity, which forced those differences to find some ad hoc form of compromise.[35] The petitions were clearly drawn up by parties with diverging and petty interests, but the experience of the square had the power to bracket off those differences and include the narrower goals of Florentines whose vision of a better life was less concerned with universal equality and more tied to the rougher justice of direct retribution. Florentine novellas are filled with such reprisals, where malefactors are punished by the cunning resolve of victims who know when to resort to the courts and when to teach valuable lessons through their own direct intervention into the spaces of sociability.[36] Despite the rhetoric of law, Florentines often resorted to their own forms of justice, even if the legend of the Buondelmonte murder was supposed to teach them otherwise.

These forms were most effective, however, when they took advantage of the concrete structures and social spaces of the city itself, since buildings and squares already carried the embedded rhetoric of legitimate authority and social identity. Transforming the piazza into what historian Stephen Milner has termed a "practiced place" tended to instill a predisposition to unite over common goals.[37] What appears to have been a large and relatively diverse crowd succeeded in toppling a regime, and the immediate beneficiaries, to a great extent, were the laboring

classes, however brief that victory might have been. This physical association, whether or not all the so-called elite leaders were actually present—or precisely because they weren't—was the moment when the stones that shaped the piazza succeeded in creating not an ideal and fully developed political reform, but an incomplete, ad hoc, and noisy egalitarian politics that, nevertheless, contained within it elements of personal score settling, power grabbing, violence, and revenge.

It was at this moment of political rupture that the two poles of the Florentine soundscape, the will to a universal harmony and the dissonant networks of verbal disorder, collided head on. The rising swell of the informal conduits that facilitated the circulation of gossip and conspiracy cohered into a single acoustic force that broke the regime's ability to exercise control through the acoustic organization of space. If, in more stable social environments, the interaction of these two aspects of the soundscape served to mediate, however imperfectly, between the aggressive overreach of the government and the fractious tendencies of local conflicts, then at certain moments each contained a latent power to, temporarily at least, shut the other down. A government's ability to speak could be drowned out by voices in the square, the site where architecture's deepest relationship to sound was manifested.

In the Piazza della Signoria, the government's palace had to protect bodies and contain secrets, while it also had to provide positions (windows and *ringhiera*) from which the government's voice could not only be heard but also legitimated. It had to provide a forum for the voice of the citizens, whose role in expressing favor, civic joy, and factional disputes had to be contained within the defined borders of an official public space. And the commune's bells connected the square to the rest of the city. They enveloped the *urbs* and the *civitas*, uniting them within an aural universe of spiritual, political, and social cohesion. However, when the gap between this official rhetoric of state and the more sectarian policies of concrete politics became large enough, the ferocious noise of a collective revolt had the power to dematerialize the thick walls built to mediate between the voice of the regime and the voices circulating in the square (figure 145). It was here that sound wantonly annihilated architecture's pretenses toward concrete permanence. It should be remembered that it was not Joshua's trumpet that caused the walls of Jericho to crumble, but the great shout of the people in response to its call to acoustic unison. Paolo da Certaldo's measured faith in the silencing power of thick walls to contain the forces unleashed by voices in the square, where one's words reached unwanted ears hidden around corners, along walls and bushes, would have been completely shattered by the acoustic strategies set in motion by the Ciompi revolt.

Even more important, this episode stands out as the real-life rejoinder to Amphion's dream of Thebes. If a single eloquent voice could stir stones and men to build a city of reason and laws, then thousands of angry ones screaming in unison in the piazza could just as easily tear down those carefully laid stones in order to refashion them into something else. The battle between the impassioned eloquence of rhetoric and the raging anger of the crowd represented the two extremes of how sound harnessed the power of the piazza and radically reorganized space.

As one who lived to witness these events, Antonio Pucci would have seen before him the vindication of the literary interpretive skills he put into play when he recorded the Amphion myth in his *zibaldone* (see chapter 1). At that moment, he would have

FIG. 145 The thick walls of the Palace of the Priors (Palazzo Vecchio), which could not protect the government from the acoustic assault of the crowd, but remained intact. Photo by author.

understood the acoustic metaphor linking architectural design—the protective walls—to the coercive power of reason, where beautiful architecture was the result of beautiful rhetoric. And he would also have seen how metaphors did not exist in a separate figurative landscape, but were caught within the direct and concrete relationship between texts and urban space, reading and spatial planning, the integrated discursive and material worlds that Florentines always inhabited at the same time. Interpretation, of words and things, of rhetoric and space, was the critical tool that bound users and producers within an endless game of signification that played out in real time and real space. As Pucci had figured out when he turned to Dante for help in interpreting the myth of Amphion, it was not stones that were induced to move by the sound of Amphion's lyre, but bodies, the bodies of men compelled, however much against their will, to submit to the melodious sound of reason. But in 1378, what Pucci might have heard was the far less harmonic noise of the market square; rather than the single eloquent voice singing from above, a thousand angry voices shrieking from below. And although republican authorities may have cringed at the sound of their own political ideology hurled at them from the mouths of the unschooled mob, much as Sacchetti's Dante recoiled from the awful sound of his own poetry tangled in the garbled cadences of the tone-deaf blacksmith, they could not have denied the remarkably rational nature of the demands: the inclusion of the vast majority of workers into the official political system. Despite the many other petty demands and conflicts that arose in the city, the central simple theme was hard to dismiss. Not a single stone was

moved in the Piazza della Signoria that day, but the noise did induce recalcitrant men *inside* the palace, however haphazardly and temporarily, to follow new laws and remake the city. Sound dissolved those palace walls while it toppled a regime's confidence, all the while leaving the concrete architecture of the piazza and its monument completely untouched.

Although they are a single episode in a larger historical narrative of targeted campaigns of burning and sacking buildings, these events, like the anecdote about Botticelli and the noisy weaver, shed a great deal of light on often-neglected aspects of urban history. They dramatize the "magical" abilities of sound in the piazza. As a counterweight to Paolo da Certaldo's paranoia, they played out Pucci's faith, however briefly, in the potentially ferocious but civilizing power located in mobilizing the architecture of the city square. That power was not located in any particular space or building, but in the transactions between architecture and the community that had the temerity to clutter it up with its unsightly presence. When the piazza was not the site of the beautifully orchestrated rituals of state, it could, noisily, annoyingly perhaps, participate in fulfilling Amphion's promise. It accomplished this through the chaotic power of a piazza populated by the diverse communities that the market square demanded as a guarantee of the efficacy of architecture and urban space. Amid all the violence, fires, treachery, and betrayal that rocked Florence that summer, for one moment, while the piazza resounded, the chronicler notes that not a shot was fired, not a house was burned, and not a single person was attacked. People in the crowd itself might even have been aware of this when, after frightening the government enough with their sonic anger, they promised that if their petitions were passed by the councils of the commune the next day, they would simply disarm themselves and go quietly off into the silence of the night.[38]

Such a popular front would never again be achieved in Florentine republican politics. None of the major factions or social groups would ever again ally themselves with the city's defeated wool workers. But something still remained of the rhetoric of working-class resistance in the later sixteenth century, when the ritual festive groups of lower-class artisans, known as *potenze* and linked to specific geographic domains in the city, could still demand concessions from the recently instituted ducal regime of Florence. David Rosenthal has pointed out how these brigades used satiric language and rituals of state to make important social bargains, thereby exhibiting the continuing capacity of the noisy street to inflect and counter the most despotic aspects of Amphion's ruthless harmonies.[39] Groups of swaggering youths taunted the duke's authority, had festive meals, and engaged in riotous behavior, just as they did in Pucci's poems, and their games of upending the social order were parodic and often tied to carnival celebrations.

However, as Rosenthal demonstrates, even though they would be reduced to purely charitable organizations by the suppression in the early seventeenth century, when even ritual satire and criticism became too much for the ducal regime to bear, they never became purely creatures of the duke. And they were not predisposed to support the defeated elite republicanism of antiducal merchants that had so often oppressed them in the past and betrayed them in 1378. The clanking and banging made by the sound of the textile looms of Botticelli's neighbor were dreamed up by Giorgio Vasari in the sixteenth century, precisely the time when that sound no longer carried the terrifying threat of a conspiring and powerful army of industrial workers. It was only a

tiresome noise that got in the way of an emerging ethos of the thoughtful and intellectually oriented artist. The representational impotency implied by Vasari's story is located in the way that the weaver no longer understood the relationship between sound and architecture, which prevented him from imagining how he and his surroundings were part of a larger interlaced social configuration. His historical and spatial amnesia allowed Botticelli to reverse the scenario precisely because the artist knew how to manipulate and control the urban soundscape. The weaver could have moved stones with the sound of his own "music," but in this case it would have led to social discord and architectural disintegration. However, in this single paragraph of Vasari's monumental literary achievement, there remains the echo of the legacy of the social relationships to which Botticelli was heir. He never questions the fact that a cloth weaver moved in next door, he only demands that he be a good neighbor in an acoustic world that, like it or not, bound them both inextricably to each other and to the stones and walls of their city.

Epilogue

Ephemerality, Durability, and Architectural History

In the last volume of Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*, *Le temps retrouvé*, the narrator notes the boredom he feels while attempting to trace the linear effects of light and shadow "in a countryside reputed one of the loveliest of France."[1] Failing to find the spark of enthusiasm that was one of the first criteria of talent, he tries to draw from his memory mental images of another place, "other 'snapshots,' those in particular which it had taken in Venice, but the mere word 'snapshot' made Venice seem to me as boring as an exhibition of photographs, and I felt that I had no more taste, no more talent for describing now what I had seen in the past, than I had had yesterday for describing what at that very moment I was, with a meticulous and melancholy eye, actually observing."[2] The art of describing, of conjuring up a visual image from the past so that it brings with it the sensations of the original encounter, is a practice that none of Proust's literary skills can realize. Searching for a palpable memory of the Adriatic city, he finds only the tedium provoked by its photographic representation, where the distancing mechanism of vision excludes a more comprehensive experience of the scenes represented.

This passage brings to mind the analogous mechanism that mediates the architectural historian's gaze, which is caught between images of the city apprehended by the various manifestations of the "eye"—the period eye, the perspectival eye, the naïve, the critical, and the interpreting "eye." In the conventional practice of architectural history, the stunning silence of pictures of nearly empty spaces is the medium through which the architectural past is traditionally interrogated (figure 146).

FIG. 146 View of the Piazza della Signoria toward the Loggia dei Lanzi. Photo by author.

The suppression of other forms of sensorial experience by architectural photography is precisely what infiltrates the mental "snapshots" that Proust is trying to visualize.

Although the durability of stones allows even ancient monuments to be photographed in their successive stages of decay and conservation, the full sensorial experience that animated them has long since vanished in the documentary photograph, disappearing under the silent tyranny of a disembodied vision. At the turn of the last century, Alois Riegl described what he called the "modern cult of monuments" (*der moderne Denkmalskultus*), in which he identified two conflicting approaches to measuring and appropriating the function of historical monuments as conduits to the past (figure 147).[3] On the one hand, advocates of a historical perspective attempted to arrest the development or decay of a monument to preserve and reconstruct its original status as an artifact, insofar as it represented a particular stage in the development of humanity in a certain field.[4] On the other, there were those who valued the more general experience of confronting the inevitable passing of time, the evocation of extreme age embedded in that very decay. This decay was imparted with a deeply felt eloquence in the long, slow disintegration of architecture. In addition, the concept of age-value conveyed the more technical and monotonous work of historical scholarship to the masses with a more affective rhetoric, "because they cannot be won by logical argumentation, but only by direct appeal to their emotions and needs."[5] It also reminded viewers that the destruction of material artifacts begins at the very moment of their completion, "in the corrosion of surfaces, in their patina,

in the wear and tear of buildings and objects. . . . The slow and inevitable disintegration of nature."[6]

For the architectural historian, this presented a serious problem. An aesthetic of beauty and nostalgia for monumental decay conflicted directly with the task of the historian to "make up, with all available means, for the damage nature has wrought."[7] But Riegl knew that arresting and eradicating all the symptoms of decay would destroy the direct connection to the past that certain architectural monuments provided for contemporary culture and that restoration was inevitably fraught with human error and controversy. The solution, therefore, was either a physical copy or a mental reconstruction, a simulacrum or a scholarly text, perhaps both, but "as genuine as possible a document for future art historical research" should be preserved.[8] Riegl knew that permanent preservation was a losing battle, and this may explain his confidence in early twentieth-century technological advances in visual documentation, which brings us back to the architectural photograph. Riegl pointed to the potential of modern techniques of visualization—color photography and facsimile—as a "new and perfect means of compensating for the loss of originals."[9] Faced with the discrepancy between the function of monuments to reveal the passage of time by slow disintegration and the need to preserve their historical integrity, Riegl had complete confidence in the image as the guarantee of historical reconstruction. As a result, a monument could register its own inevitable demise to modern society, while history could catalogue it safely within a medium whose durability came not from its materiality but from its reproducibility. But this durability came with a cost. Buildings and spaces are ideally photographed and studied without the intrusiveness of contemporary bodies, whose noisy presence often obscures a clear perspective

FIG. 147 The slow collapse of the stones of Venice in the Campo dei Mori. Photo by Raoul Mörchen.

on the geometric harmony and the subtle contrasts of light and shadow that animate their design (figure 148). The permanence of the monument would be guaranteed by a medium whose materiality was far less durable than stone but whose capacity for endless repetition and diffusion, not to mention its ability to arrest time as a historically produced category, made it

FIG. 148 A nineteenth-century view of the Piazza della Signoria, where the presence of mobile viewers renders them ghostly intruders due to the slow shutter speed of the still camera. Photo: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz—Max-Planck-Institut.

far more permanent as a means of noninvasive restoration. This allowed actual monuments to continue to produce temporal connections with the past through the direct phenomenological engagement of viewers with their slow disintegration. Riegl, looking at the world around him and observing how people actually interacted with their physical environment, was searching for a way in which the study of the material remains of the past would not get in the way of a living, breathing cultural engagement with that past. Or, to put it more succinctly, he was setting guidelines so that the practice of history would not get in the way of making history. But was such a separation possible, or even desirable? Certainly for the practical application of monument preservation in Europe, about which he was writing, the parameters of use and study could be worked out under such general guidelines, but did an architectural history founded on the study of images of things not also preclude the excavation of the very intimate sensorial experiences of the material past that he was trying to preserve? In other words, does not the history of architecture need to account for the ways in which people actually encountered it rather than limit its analysis to a purely formal investigation of geometry, representational forms, and the cultural meaning of design?

Riegl may not have believed that such an inquiry was within the purview of a rigorously delimited

architectural history. Nevertheless, his insights led me to wonder if there was a way that architectural history could turn its gaze toward the ways in which past societies engaged with the world around them, to find the prehistory of Riegl's cult of monuments: how premodern communities encountered the temporal dimensions of architectural monuments in a continual process of alteration, veneration, interpretation, and reconfiguration. Such a history would naturally complement the historical work of excavating original states of architecture by confronting it with the temporal journey of monuments through successive and repeated utterances that gave meaning to the people who used them. What I found was that not only did these communities in Florence find links to their past through their encounters with the built environment, they also found creative ways to turn those temporal links into meaningful spaces for their lives in the present. In doing so, they were exploring and manipulating the simultaneously shifting relations of durability and ephemerality produced by walls and memory. Since Riegl's time, a great deal of scholarly work has explored the relationship between space, place, the built environment, and ritual forms that express the collective identities of urban societies through the production of collective memory. Architectural history has a lot to contribute to this debate by studying the way that architecture was built to facilitate, regulate, enhance, and prevent bodily interaction. Even after its original moment, the persistence of the architectural monument meant that it continued to interact in stable and dynamic ways with successive generations.

Let me return to Proust and his frustration about how his own clear-sighted eye could only summarize joyless reflections of the past. At that moment, he is about to stumble upon, literally, just the kind of sensorial experience he seeks. In his distraction, he fails to see a car that is coming directly toward him. The sound of the chauffeur's warning, therefore, causes him to suddenly jump back. In doing so, he trips "against the uneven paving stones in front of the coach-house." It is at that moment, when he is recovering his balance, that he puts his "foot on a stone, which was slightly lower than its neighbour," and all at once he is immersed in a series of sensations. A deep azure intoxicates his eyes. He feels wrapped in impressions of coolness and dazzling light that swirl around him. And almost at once he recognizes the vision. It is Venice, and he is again standing on the uneven paving stones of the baptistery of San Marco (figure 149). All of the things he felt so keenly at that moment, which his efforts to describe and the pretended "snapshots" have failed to conjure, reappear and fill him with an intense happiness.[10]

Proust's involuntary rediscovery of the intimate bonds between sensory perception, architecture, and memory suggests that although one's individual memory resides in the mind, it often requires a dynamic, sometimes involuntary interaction of the body and architecture to restore its full sensorial dimensions to the cognitive process. Photographic documentation and historical work could preserve the monument by setting its image outside the continuum of a phenomenological experience of the past, but Riegl understood that the general passage of time was represented in monuments—written, visual, or architectural—by the traces of age accumulated throughout their existence. However, as Michael Gubser points out, this was not a function of the artifact or the viewer alone but an activity they both joined in, or literally "made with" each other (*mitgemacht*).[11] Therefore, the wider cultural memory of a community was embedded in the monument, but just like Proust's

FIG. 149 Original entrance to the baptistery of San Marco, framed by the so-called pillars of Acre, Venice. Photo by author.

architectural stumbling, that memory was brought to life through the intimate exchange between bodies and buildings. And if we turn our attention to the ways in which this was a practice that early modern communities deployed not simply to be aware of the passage of time but to make sense of and bring order to their immediate social world, then we have moved beyond the "joyless reflections" of the photograph to understand architecture's temporal journey within a fuller urban sensorium that penetrated deep into all layers of a society. What Proust's illumination expresses is the way in which a wandering, searching eye on a quest for a fixed point of view—those joyless snapshots, Riegl's restorative photographs—can be thwarted by a conspiracy of sound and stone. Hearing a voice and touching architecture become the unexpected triggers that produce a full sensorial memory of a living architectural experience. Consequently, understanding architecture requires that we also pay attention to the ways in which past communities responded to, interpreted, and interacted with the walls that surrounded them.

Such a phenomenological approach to the architecture of the past may be an important counter to the perceived threat of our increasingly digitized spatial environment. When Duke Alessandro presided over the destruction of the bell of the Florentine commune, he was fully aware of the connection between sound, architecture, and collective memory, and knew that each reinforced the strength of the others. The ritual destruction, therefore, was an attempt to enforce a collective forgetting, so that later his successor as duke could safely reminisce about how great that bell was and how it was heard for miles around, while disregarding its destruction and transformation into coins minted with the duke's image to pay the troops who had taken the city (figure 55).[12] The sound of that bell was now part of an official, depoliticized memory of the city's past greatness. Many of the episodes, literary and historical, discussed in this book suggest that urban monuments were not a static archive of the past but sustained the connection between urban communities and their past as a productive, intimate, sensual gesture. Between buildings and bodies was a dynamic exchange in which the durability of stones could be excavated, enhanced, extended, and reconstructed by the ephemeral nature of looking, touching, and listening.

Riegl was never explicit about the extravisual aspects of architecture, and he unequivocally exempted "aural monuments" from his argument. How significant is it, therefore, that he refers to a bell tower four times in his essay? It first appears within a triad of monuments to show how historical value alone fails to account for the interest that monuments can elicit from us. In looking at an old belfry (*Kirchturm*), "we must make a similar distinction between our perception of the localized historical memories it contains and our more general awareness of the passage of time, the belfry's survival over time."[13] It is here that Riegl uses the term *mitgemacht* to express the way, lost in the English translation, in which the bell tower has participated in, lived through, and joined in the evocation of a general sense of time passing.[14] The bell tower reappears as an example of how age-value is one of the most universally recognizable aspects of a work of art. It had an advantage over all other ideal values of the work because it spoke directly to even the humblest members of society; even the "most simple-minded farmhand is able to distinguish an old belfry from a new one."[15] As such, this kind of monument was divine revelation rather than logical reasoning, leading Riegl to compare its power to the direct affective appeal of Christianity to the masses of late antiquity.[16] Later in

the text, the bell tower figures twice as the object upon which historical and age-values clash under the theme of restoration. The replacement of a few weathered stones would never hurt its historical integrity, "since its original form remains the same and enough of it has been preserved that one can practically overlook the modern repairs."[17] However, even these minor visible alterations would seriously disturb its emotional appeal. And that leads to the most radical historicist intervention. Although historical value only granted full documentary significance to the original state of the monument, it is "willing to concede some value to copies if the originals are irretrievably lost."[18] A year before his essay was published, the campanile of Venice had collapsed into a pile of rubble, and it would be rebuilt "as it was, where it was" (*com'era, dov'era*; see figures 150 and 151). However, Riegl does not see this as the true historical project, since it is precisely at this point in his argument that he looks to the future of photography, not to reconstructed copies, to offer new and perfect means of compensating for loss. Therefore, the manner in which Florence is increasingly becoming a simulacrum of itself, as more and more public monuments are replaced with "perfect" copies, might have horrified Riegl.

FIG. 150 Rescuing a bell of the campanile of San Marco from the rubble in 1902. Studio Naya.

Mario Carpo, in an article that makes direct reference and homage to Riegl's study of the modern cult of monuments, points to the way that digital techniques of reproduction have made direct physical engagement with monuments and the act of traveling to monumental sites unnecessary and laid waste the auratic power of the original.[19] He suggests that "monuments in stone may be destined to play a lesser role in the future than they have in the past."[20] Instead, he envisions them being "replaced by music, voices, words, and all that can be digitally recorded, transmitted, and reenacted. In fact," he writes, "to some extent this is already an indispensible part of the monument."[21] This may be true of modern monuments, but the persistent popularity of cultural tourism to both Venice and Florence in recent years suggests that digital reproduction has had an entirely opposite effect, making it even more widely desirable to interact in real time with monuments with age-value and historical value. I would argue, moreover, that the local Florentine experience of the city's monuments that have been the subject of this study made it abundantly clear that noise, music, voices, and words were always already a fundamental part of the monument, that they were, in fact, the medium through which those

FIG. 151 The campanile of San Marco, Venice, seen from the lagoon. Photo by author.

monuments could function as links to the past. And wouldn't the capacity to record these ephemera surrounding the monument merely extend the promise of the techniques of reproduction that Riegl saw in color photography? Perhaps such technologies will fulfill Riegl's desire for more perfect copies without becoming deceitful simulacra of the original, which would continue its necessary temporal journey into oblivion. But this also means, paradoxically, that the historical academic mode is often concerned precisely with removing direct sensorial engagement with the material object in historical analysis, likely in the service of a scientific objectivity that would be undermined by other sensorial stimuli beyond the cool detachment of vision.

Like Proust, the nineteenth-century architectural historian, critic, and conservationist John Ruskin, whom Proust translated, was very interested in Venetian stones, and he articulated a particular anxiety about the actual durability of the city's architecture. In the famous opening of his elegiac homage to the city in *The Stones of Venice*, he depicts the city as a ruin, a ghost, "so quiet," whose "faint reflection in the mirage of the lagoon" confounds the eye's powers of discerning between hard stones and fleeting shadows.[22] Amid this visual confusion, Ruskin sets out to trace the lines of the city's image, to fix it in his own culture's memory. Ruskin, like Riegl, makes no explicit attempt to integrate the acoustic dimensions of architecture into his architectural history of Venice. But, in an appendix, he reveals how fully aware he was of the necessary dialectic between voices and walls enacted by turning gondoliers, who had to call out when approaching sharp corners to alert oncoming vessels (figure 152).

FIG. 152 The blind corners of one of Venice's many canals, where gondoliers had to signal their approach vocally. Photo by author.

Ruskin describes the verbal cues that each gondolier used to determine who would swing wide on the turn and on which side they should pass in a canal system full of blind corners. Since the gondola has no keel, it meant that the gondolier had to counter its lateral momentum when turning by planting his foot firmly on and thrusting off from the vertical surface of the city's architecture to complete the turn.[23] Such acts demonstrate the symbiotic relationship that always existed between water and buildings in Venice's circulatory and communicative networks—voices, feet, walls—and was brought about by the body's direct contact with stones.

Ruskin also seems to be perfectly aware of the destructive power that sound wielded over architecture. And I think it is significant that Venice's imminent and soon to be complete material dissolution, which Ruskin laments in the very opening lines of his work, is characterized as a gradual progression toward a final urban silence. He ends his introduction to the decaying city by evoking the incessant rhythmic acoustic warning in whose wake the city was inevitably caught, which was "uttered by every one of the fast-gaining waves, that beat, like passing bells, against the stones of Venice" (figure 153).[24] Those stones gave way in 1902, when the campanile

FIG. 153 High water at the entrance to the Ca' d'Oro, Venice. Photo by author.

of San Marco collapsed. Writing immediately in the wake of its destruction, Riegl admitted that the historical impulse could yield to the complete physical and aesthetic reconstruction of the monument. But there was something about the concrete copy that seemed to bother him, manifested perhaps by the constant elision such a copy continually brings about by silencing a historical rupture, by occluding completely the passage of time. But how many people, even those who know full well, constantly forget that the campanile of San Marco is a facsimile, a simulacrum? And how many care?

In linking the regular movement of waves with the acoustic repetition of bells, Ruskin linked the corrosive power of water to the function of bells in the marking of time and tolling for the dead. Bells, as material devices that produced sound, were complicated objects in the discourse of durability and ephemerality (figure 154). Cast bronze was about as durable a material as any produced by human labor, but, for both political and economic reasons, bells were constantly disappearing from their locations and reappearing in others. They were also constantly being transformed from acoustic transmitters into weapons of war. However, their ringing, which marked the passing and the coming of the day, the time of labor, commercial exchange, birth, matrimony, eating, sleep, death, the exercise of war, justice, and peace, the celebrations and mourning of entire urban communities, not to mention the guarantees of Christian salvation,

FIG. 154 The Marangona, the bell that was Venice's most important acoustic signal in the Renaissance, rang at sunrise, for laborers at the Arsenale, at terce, and at midnight. Campanile of San Marco, Venice. Photo by author.

the protection of prayer, and the destruction of evil, made bells one of the most common and pervasive protagonists of early modern life. Through incessant repetition they functioned as a kind of urban *permanenza*, monuments that temporally overlaid the city with rhythmic washes that were not wholly unlike the waves that Ruskin heard slowly devouring his beloved city.

Ruskin would himself remember a litany of hardships he had endured while studying the stones of Venice, one of which was the bells of all the churches, which, maddeningly, used to ring most when he happened to be at work in their towers.[25] As he was scrutinizing architectural details and the city below him, he would have been painfully aware of the intimate relationship between bells and urban life. However, instead of inspiring the body's memory through its engagement with architecture, the sounds he heard, Ruskin imagined, would become all that remained of the memory of Venice. His desire to fix Venice's image in text and image in this monumental book, therefore, was a work of preservation that might parallel the material restoration of the city. He would later criticize the conservation efforts being carried out at San Marco, knowing full well that a desire for perfect restoration competed with his own desire for a more historically honest preservation. After the structural integrity of the building was secured, he declared that "every external stone should be set back in its actual place . . . the new stones, instead of being made to resemble the old ones, should be left blank of sculpture, and every one should have the date engraved upon it."[26] It really was the stones, literally, set in their proper places the way the sound of Amphion's lyre could order them, that would allow the work of a much larger global memory to persist even as Venice was dying as a site for the preservation of both a local urban and a global cultural collective memory.

With Ruskin we discern an intellectual anxiety that will be built into the disciplinary apparatus of architectural history: that the material resilience of stones does not necessarily guarantee the durability of architecture. This anxiety stems from his belief, expressed in *The Stones of Venice*, that architecture's function was to link successive generations together; thus, he advocated for a national architecture of the most supreme durability that would contain both a spatial and temporal stability. In *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, he criticizes the "pitiful concretions of lime and clay which spring up in mildewed forwardness . . . upon those thin, tottering, foundationless shells of splintered wood and imitated stone."[27] Instead, even domestic architecture should be "built to stand as long as human work at its longest can be hoped to stand; recording to their children what they had been."[28] Architecture had to become both monumental and memorial, linking generations across time. Half a century before Riegl, John Ruskin underscored architecture's privileged role in preserving the past within the collective imaginary of urban communities. "We may live without her, and worship without her, but we cannot remember without her."[29]

Writing in the 1960s, the architectural theorist Aldo Rossi expanded this dialogue with historical monuments to include the entire urban fabric of the city itself. Although some monuments had to remain physically inviolable, others could be adaptively repurposed and still nurture urban life while maintaining the potential for further modifications in the future.[30] Modern cities had a choice, therefore, regarding degrees of architectural permanence, but he warned that radical changes and the destruction of

monuments eliminated urban memory. Rossi's claims stemmed from his understanding of the city as both a material fact, something made, and the site of events that expressed a set of values belonging to the collective imagination of its inhabitants.[31]

In fact, this latter aspect of the city actually superseded the permanence of architecture. Rossi cites Carlo Cataneo, who saw a cultural geography embedded in the walls of the Italian city that predated all of its conquerors.[32] Rossi concludes, paradoxically, that the civic culture of a city is permanent, therefore, not its walls. Cattaneo had used the example of Milan, whose ambition, not its physical or cultural magnitude, brought upon it the hatred of neighboring cities. However, when its walls were laid to waste and the city was no longer a regional threat, those former enemies reestablished their filial bonds and lifted it from the ruins.[33] City walls may fall, but the primordial integrity of the community persists within and beyond them. What are the mechanisms, therefore, that provide for the permanence of such dynamic and malleable entities as urban communities, whose links to the past depend on the integrity of its architectural monuments? Florentine sources—laws, stories, political crises, and everyday life—continue to tell us that the sounds the city made could project the presence of architectural monuments throughout the city, excavate lost monuments from the past, guide inhabitants toward the future, ground identities in space, and open up direct connections between the concrete experience of time and the fluid topographies of space.

As representative, in some respects, of the multinational force that descended on the Italian peninsula to lay the foundations of our discipline in the nineteenth century, Ruskin and Riegl were both, I think, deeply concerned about the antagonistic relationships that practicing and experiencing history could produce through historical analysis of architecture and urban space. Caught within the phenomenological dilemma of this art form, where viewers were also embodied, active users and creators, architecture had to resolve the tensions between its historical origins and the contemporary communities it sustained by keeping the past present and accessible while remaining the object of a dispassionate historical investigation.

Riegl and Ruskin might have been absolutely thrilled with the digital modeling techniques that are being developed in the twenty-first century as modes of intellectual inquiry. However, they were highly sensitive to the memorial function of architecture and its importance for maintaining social bonds, and both acknowledged, even if only implicitly, the larger sensorial dimensions that drove that relationship. My goal, however, has been to turn the focus of an architectural study onto precisely those relations from which Ruskin and Riegl found it necessary to extract a more rigorous visually based methodology. And what I have found was a whole sonic world in which Florentines, by listening and making sounds, continually reconfigured the concrete dimensions of their city. In doing so, they created a whole series of symbolic utterances that are crucial to understanding what architecture and urban space, embedded as they were in social identity, meant to those who created and consumed a Renaissance that was very noisy indeed.

NOTES

Abbreviations

ASF	Archivio di Stato di Firenze
ASV	Archivio di Stato di Venezia
BNCF	Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze

Introduction

1. The emerging field of digital humanities can provide productive ways of visualizing and making sense of the Florentine soundscape in ways that complement and extend more traditional forms of scholarship. As a compelling example of the genre, see the acoustic reconstruction of the space around Saint Paul's cathedral for John Donne's Gunpowder Day sermon by a team from North Carolina State University. http://vpcp.chass.ncsu.edu/.
2. The composer R. Murray Schafer was the first to consider the urban soundscape as an object of study from the point of view of musicology. See R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (Rochester, Vt.: Destiny Books, 1993). Other important musicological studies include Reinhard Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Robert L. Kendrick, *The Sounds of Milan, 1585–1650* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Flora Dennis, "Sound and Domestic Boundaries in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Italy," *Studies in the Decorative Arts* (2008): 7–19; Dennis, "Resurrecting Forgotten Sound: Fans and Handbells in Early Modern Italy," in *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and Its Meanings*, ed. Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), 191–210. Literary historians have also been at the forefront of this field. See Eric Wilson, "Plagues, Fairs, and Street Cries: Sounding Out Society and Space in Early Modern London," *Modern Language Studies* 25, no. 3 (1995): 1–42; Bruce R. Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999). An important collection of essays for both music and urban historians, one that seeks to establish the methodological groundwork for future research as well as a useful review of the historiography, is found in "Music and Urban History," ed. Vanessa Harding, special issue, *Urban History* 29, no. 1 (2002). See especially Tim Carter, "The Sound of Silence: Models for an Urban Musicology," ibid., 8–18; Fiona Kisby, "Music in European Cities and Towns to *c*. 1650: A Bibliographical Survey," ibid., 74–82; Peter Borsay, "Sounding the Town," ibid., 92–102. Cf. David Garrioch, "Sounds of the City: The Soundscape of Early Modern European Towns," *Urban History* 30, no. 1 (2003): 5–25. Historians working on the aural past include Mark M. Smith, *Listening to Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Emily Ann Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900–1933* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002); Richard Cullen Rath, *How Early America Sounded* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003). Cf. the important collections of essays in Mark M. Smith, *Hearing History: A Reader* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004); Michael Bull and Les Back, *The Auditory Culture Reader*, Sensory Formations Series (Oxford: Berg, 2003).
3. On the historical importance of bells, see Alain Corbin, *Les cloches de la terre: Paysage sonore et culture sensible dans les campagnes su XIXe siècle* (Paris: A. Michel, 1994), translated by Martin Thom as *Village Bells: Sound and Meaning in the Nineteenth-Century French Countryside*, European

Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

4. Trachtenberg's study of the bell tower of the Florentine cathedral and his analysis of the proportions of the cathedral in relation to the motet written for its consecration in 1436 are rare exceptions in Renaissance architectural history. See Marvin Trachtenberg, *The Campanile of Florence Cathedral: "Giotto's Tower"* (New York: New York University Press, 1971); Trachtenberg, "Architecture and Music Reunited: A New Reading of Dufay's 'Nuper Rosarum Flores' and the Cathedral of Florence," *Renaissance Quarterly* 54, no. 3 (2001): 740–75.
5. An innovative study that is sensitive to precisely these issues in terms of interior spaces is Deborah Howard and Laura Moretti, *Sound and Space in Renaissance Venice: Architecture, Music, Acoustics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).
6. See, for example, Nick Cox, "Rumours and Risings: Plebeian Insurrection and the Circulation of Subversive Discourse Around 1597," in *Subversion and Scurrility: Popular Discourse in Europe from 1500 to the Present*, ed. Dermot Cavanagh and Tim Kirk (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); Alexander Cowan, "Gossip and Street Culture in Early Modern Venice," *Journal of Early Modern History* 12, nos. 3–4 (2008): 13–33; Elizabeth Horodowich, "The Gossiping Tongue: Oral Networks, Public Life, and Political Culture in Early Modern Venice," *Renaissance Studies* 19, no. 1 (2005): 22–45; Filippo de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Rosa Salzberg, *Ephemeral City: Cheap Print and Urban Culture in Renaissance Venice* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014).
7. On the structure and logic of trecento pictorial space, see John White, *The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1987), 23–112; Marvin Trachtenberg, *Dominion of the Eye: Urbanism, Art, and Power in Early Modern Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 149–242. On the development and meaning of the invention of perspective, see Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, trans. C. S. Wood (New York: Zone Books, 1991); Samuel Y. Edgerton, *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Linear Perspective* (New York: Basic Books, 1975); Hubert Damisch, *The Origin of Perspective* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994). On the representation of cities, see Felicity Ratté, *Picturing the City in Medieval Italian Painting* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2006); Lucia Nuti, *Ritratti di Città: Visione e Memoria tra Medioevo e Settecento* (Venice: Marsilio, 1996); Nuti, "The Perspective Plan in the Sixteenth Century: The Invention of a Representational Language," *Art Bulletin* 76 (1994): 105–28; John Pinto, "Origins and Development of the Ichnographic City Plan," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 45 (1976): 35–50.
8. Trachtenberg's insights into the square's visual geometry can be found in Trachtenberg, *Dominion of the Eye*, 87–147.
9. Gregorio Dati, "Istoria di Firenze," in *Firenze contro Milano: Gli intellettuali fiorentini nelle guerre con i Visconti (1390–1440)*, ed. Antonio Lanza (Anzio [Rome]: De Rubeis, 1991). Dati's description will be considered in more detail in chapter 3.
10. Scholars still debate the manner in which its melodic and harmonic structures translate the dome's double-shell construction and the entire church's proportional system into music. See Charles Warren, "Brunelleschi's Dome and Dufay's Motet," *Musical Quarterly* 5, no. 9 (1973): 92–105; Craig Wright, "Dufay's *Nuper Rosarum Flores*, King Solomon's Temple, and the Veneration of the Virgin," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 4, no. 7 (1994): 395–441; Trachtenberg, "Architecture and Music Reunited," 740–75.
11. For research into Renaissance acoustics and the role of buildings in the production and performance of music in Venice, see Howard and Moretti, *Sound and Space*.
12. August Schmarsow, *Das Wesen der architektonischen Schöpfung* (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1894), 8, translated as "The Essence of Architectural Creation," in *Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873–1893*, ed. Robert Vischer, Harry Francis Mallgrave, and Eleftherios Ikonomou (Santa Monica, Calif.: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities; distributed by the University of Chicago Press, 1994), 285.
13. Schmarsow, *Das Wesen*, 15; Schmarsow, "The Essence," 288.
14. Schmarsow, *Das Wesen*, 11; Schmarsow, "The Essence," 286–87.
15. Schmarsow, *Das Wesen*, 12; Schmarsow, "The Essence," 287.
16. Schmarsow, *Das Wesen*, 11; Schmarsow, "The Essence," 286.
17. Schmarsow, *Das Wesen*, 15; Schmarsow, "The Essence," 288–89.
18. Schmarsow describes how this will to order leads to architectural creation. Schmarsow, *Das Wesen*, 12–17; Schmarsow, "The Essence," 287–89.
19. Schmarsow, *Das Wesen*, 8; Schmarsow, "The Essence," 285.
20. In his landmark study, Kevin Lynch breaks down the components that make up a series of overlapping and interrelated images of the city—what I have termed "fluid topographies"—into paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. According to Lynch, urban inhabitants reconstitute these actual elements into fragmented but

useful images in order to negotiate the urban environment. Consequently, it is something urban dwellers have always been compelled to do, in various ways at various times. Understanding the specific mechanisms by which inhabitants constructed these topographies at certain historical moments and in specific urban areas, therefore, sheds a great deal of light upon the meaning of architecture, urban space, and visible environment. See Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Mass.: Technology Press, 1960), 85–90.

21. On the powerful urban image presented by the city of Florence on which such mappings occurred, see ibid., 92.
22. Barry Blesser and Linda-Ruth Salter, *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening? Experiencing Aural Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), 1.
23. Ibid., 2.
24. Smith, *Acoustic World*, 51.
25. Schafer, *The Soundscape*, 3–5.
26. Ibid., 4.
27. Corbin, *Village Bells*, ix.
28. Ibid., xix.
29. Ibid., 49.
30. It is evident from Corbin's research that similar social dynamics of bells were still present in rural France on the cusp of modernity in many ways that they had been in earlier urban societies. For an extremely incisive historical study of the bells of medieval Rome, see Sible De Blaauw, "Campanae supra urbem: Sull'uso delle campane nella Roma medievale," *Rivista di storia della chiesa in Italia* 47, no. 2 (1993): 367–414. The literature specifically on bells, as Corbin has remarked, is often confined to local antiquarians and was also part of a nineteenth-century scholarly interest in an object that was, perhaps not coincidentally, beginning to disappear as an important form of mass communication just at that time, like so much else. Corbin, *Village Bells*, 5. As an example, see J. D. Blavignac, *La cloche: Études sur son histoire et sur ses rapports avec la societé aux différents ages* (Geneva: Grosset & Trembley, 1877). Much of the subsequent research that deals with bells is rooted in studies concerning the history of clocks, timekeeping, and the night. See, for example, Francesco Novati, "La 'squilla da lontano' è quella dell'Ave Maria?," in *Indagini e postille dantesche* (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1899); Alessandro Lattes, "La campana serale nei secoli XIII e XIV secondo gli statuti delle città italiane," in Novati, *Indagini e postille dantesche*; Gerhard Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).
31. Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 209.
32. Ibid., 197.

Chapter 1

1. The thirteenth-century Florentine political philosopher Brunetto Latini defined the city this way in his commentary on Cicero's *De inventione*. See Brunetto Latini, *La rettorica* (Florence: Galletti e Cocci, 1915), 10. The passage is translated in *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric: Language Arts and Literary Theory, AD 300–1475*, ed. Rita Copeland and I. Sluiter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 762.
2. In the Middle Ages the term *urbs* was usually reserved for the city of Rome, while *civitas* designated cities in general. On this distinction, see Niall Atkinson, "The Republic of Sound: Listening to Florence at the Threshold of the Renaissance," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 16, nos. 1/2 (2013): 59n2.
3. Horace, *Ars Poetica*, in *Satires, Epistles, and Ars Poetica*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, rev. ed., Loeb Classical Library (London: W. Heinemann, 1929), 394–401. This is the most extensive reference to the myth and occurs within a discussion of how Amphion and Orpheus civilized men with their music.
4. Raped by Zeus, Antiope had twin sons, Amphion and Zethus, who were raised by shepherds. Amphion became adept at music and was presented with a lyre from Hermes, to which he added three strings to make seven in total. Conquering Thebes was revenge for the twins, whose mother had been imprisoned by its regent, Lycus. After having conquered the city, Amphion played his lyre with such magical beauty that the stones followed him and fitted themselves into place, showing his brother how it was a better aid to building than his own physical strength. See Michael Grant and John Hazel, *Who's Who in Classical Mythology* (London: Routledge, 2002), s.v. "Amphion and Zethus," http://www.credoreference.com/entry/772866/ (accessed October 23, 2008).
5. Besides Euripides' lost *Antiope*, the Amphion myth appears in P. Papinius Statius, *Thebaid*, in *Statius*, ed. and trans. J. H. Mozley, 2 vols., vol. 1, Loeb Classical Library (London: W. Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1928), 9–10; Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *Hercules furens*, in *Seneca's Tragedies*, ed. and trans. Frank Justus Miller, 2 vols., vol. 1, Loeb Classical Library 62 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1917), 22.
6. For a discussion of the dynamics of constructing borders and organizing jurisdictions in Florence, see Niall Atkinson, "Architecture, Anxiety, and the Fluid Topographies of Renaissance Florence" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2009), 41–116.
7. David Friedman, *Florentine New Towns: Urban Design in the Late Middle Ages* (New York: Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1988), 201.

8. Alain Corbin, *Les cloches de la terre: Paysage sonore et culture sensible dans les campagnes au XIXe siècle* (Paris: A. Michel, 1994), translated by Martin Thom as *Village Bells: Sound and Meaning in the Nineteenth-Century French Countryside*, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), xix.
9. For biographical information on Antonio Pucci, see Domenico Maria Manni, "Notizie storiche intorno ad Antonio Pucci celebre versificatore fiorentino," in *Delle poesie di Antonio Pucci, celebre versificatore fiorentino del MCCC, e prima, della Cronica di Giovanni Villani ridotta in terza rima*, vol. 3, ed. Fra Ildefonso di San Luigi, Delizie degli eruditi toscani 5 (Florence: Gaetano Cambiagi, 1774). For his position within Florentine merchant and textual culture, see William Robins, "Antonio Pucci, Guardiano degli atti della Mercanzia," *Studi e problemi di critica testuale* 61 (2000): 29–70; Robins, "Vernacular Textualities in Fourteenth-Century Florence," in *The Vulgar Tongue: Medieval and Postmedieval Vernacularity*, ed. Fiona Somerset and Nicholas Watson (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 112–31. For more general biographical information, see the introduction to Antonio Pucci, *Le noie*, ed. Kenneth McKenzie (Paris: Les presses universitaires de France, 1931).
10. C. Ciociola, "Poesia gnomica, d'arte, di corte, allegorica e didattica: Antonio Pucci," in *Il Trecento*, ed. Marcello Ravesi, Storia della letteratura italiana (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1995), 403.
11. Stephen J. Milner, "'Fanno Bandire, Notificare, et Expressamente Comandare': Town Criers and the Information Economy of Renaissance Florence," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 16, nos. 1/2 (2013): 115, 135. The document recording Pucci's petition to the government to be relieved of his duties as *banditore*, cited by Milner, is published in Salomone Morpurgo, *Antonio Pucci e Vito Biagi, banditori fiorentini del secolo XIV: Dodici strambotti di Luigi Pulci* (Rome: Coi tipi di Forzani, 1881), 13–14.
12. According to Dale Kent, Pucci's *zibaldone* was one of the most popular "manuals" used by street entertainers. See D. V. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 80; Kent, "Michele del Giogante's House of Memory," in *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence*, ed. William J. Connell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 116.
13. Antonio Pucci, *Libro di varie storie* (Palermo: Alberto Varvaro, 1957). "Anfione fu figliuolo di Giove et marito di Niobe et d'edifichatore della cipta di Tebeed era molto isperto et molto scienziato et coll'aiuto delle iscienze ordinò et fecie quella cipta ispezialmente per la scienza della musicha però ch'egli et la moglie sonavano et cantavano si dolcemente che secondo i poeti le pietre prese medesimo si moveano et aconciavansi l'una sopra l'altra, et in questo modo murò la cipta." The passage can also be found in Antonio Pucci's autograph "Zibaldone," Biblioteca Laurenziana, Tempi. 2, 103r.
14. Pucci, "Zibaldone," 70v and following.
15. Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*, ed. Charles Southward Singleton (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 32, 10–12; Pucci, "Zibaldone," 103v.
16. Pucci, "Zibaldone," 103v. "Quelle donne cioè le scienzie aiutin così lui nela sua *Commedia*. Ma deli credere non che le pietre si murassono elle medesime, ma che per lo senno suo quella città era guardata, conservata e murata" (Those women, that is to say, sciences, helped him like this in his *Commedia*. However, do not believe that the stones walled the city by themselves, but by his good judgment that city was protected, preserved, and walled).
17. [Andrea Lanci], *L'ottimo commento della Divina Commedia [Andrea Lancia]: Testo inedito d'un contemporaneo di Dante . . .* , ed. Alessandro Torri, vol. 1 (Pisa: N. Capurro, 1827), 32.10–12.
18. *Commento alla Divina Commedia d'anonimo fiorentino del secolo XIV, ora per la prima volta stampato a cura di Pietro Fanfani*, vol. 1 (Bologna: G. Romagnoli, 1866), 32.10–12.
19. Luciano Scarabelli, ed., *Comedia di Dante degli Allaghieri col commento di Jacopo della Lana bolognese* (Bologna: Tipografia Regia, 1866–67), 32.10–12.
20. *Guido da Pisa's Expositiones et glose super Comediam Dantis, or Commentary on Dante's Inferno*, ed. Vincenzo Cioffari (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1974), 32.10–12.
21. After his tenure as bell ringer and then herald, Pucci was responsible for maintaining the acts of the Mercanzia (merchant's tribunal) from 1371 to 1382. See Robins, "Antonio Pucci," 29–30.
22. Ibid., 30–31.
23. Giuseppe Corsi, ed., *Rimatori del Trecento* (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1969), 870–71.

    I'ho vedute già di molte piazza
    per diverse città. . . .
    Bella mi par quella de' Perugini
    di molte cose adorna per ragione. . . .
    Quella di Siena, che si chiama il Campo,
    par un catino, e di freddo, di verno,
    vi si consuma e, di state, di vampo.

    Unless otherwise stated, all the translations of this poem are my own.

24. Ibid.

> [N]iente son di frutte e di bellezza
> e di cio' ch'a la gente da' governo
> appetto a quell ache mi da' vaghezza
> di dirne in rima.

Connecting the market's practical role in provisioning the city's material needs with its role in maintaining some kind of political regulation—"a la gente dà governo," literally, "gives government to the people"—makes a provocative statement about how urban order and social communities come into being, and it is with this statement in mind that the following reading of the poem proceeds.

25. Laws forbade carts with wood to be brought to the Mercato Vecchio, except on Saturdays. See ASF, Statuti, 13 (Statutes of the Capitano del Popolo, 1355, in Tuscan translation), fol. 4, 14. Live pigs were banned; see ibid., 4, 17.
26. *Rimatori*, 871. "[D]i raccontarvi con parole preste / Le proprietà che nel Mercato sento." The sensual ambiguity of the term *sentire* (hear, feel, touch) is crucial in constructing the embodied experience of the market.
27. Ibid., 872.

> E sempre quivi ha gran baratteria:
> contentanvisi molto e barattieri
> perchè v'è pien di lor mercatantia,
> cioè di prestatori e rigattieri,
> tavole di contanti e dadaiuoli,
> e d'ogni cosa ch'a lor fa mestieri.

28. Ibid., 872–73.

> [V]i stanno trecche:diciam di quelle con parole brutte
> che tutto il dì; per due castagne secche
> garrono insieme chiamandosi putte . . . vengon le forsette con panieri
> di fichi, d'uve, di pere e di pesche
> se le moteggi, ascoltan volontieri.

29. Ibid., 873. "Non fu già mai così nobil giardino / come a quel tempo gli è *Mercato Vecchio*, /che l'occhio e 'l gusto pasce al fiorentino."
30. Ibid., 874.

> Gentili uomini e donne v'ha dal lato,
> che spesso veggion venire a le mani
> le trecche e' barattier c'hanno giucato.
> E meretrici v'usano e ruffiani,
> battifancelli, zanaiuoli e gaglioffi
> e i tignosi, scabbiosi e cattani.

31. Ibid. "E vedesi chi perde con gran soffi / biastimar con la mano a la mascella / e ricever e dar di molti ingoffi" (And one sees who loses with great wheezing, cursing with their hand grasping at their jaw, suffering blows and throwing many of their own).
32. Ibid., 874–75.

> E talor vi si fa con le coltella
> ed uccide l'un l'altro, e tutta quanta
> allor si turba quella piazza bella
> E spesso ancor vi si trastulla e canta,
> pero' che d'ogni parte arriva quivi
> che e' vagabondo e di poco s'ammanta.
> E per lo freddo v'ha di si' cattivi
> che nudi stan con le calcagna al culo
> perche' si son di vestimenti privi
> e mostran spesso quel che mostra il mulo;
> pescano spesso a riposata lenza
> perch'e' ciascun di danar netto e pulo.

33. Ibid., 877–78.
34. The city laid claim to the square as far back as the 1290s, when it declared that economic zones were under public or communal jurisdiction. See Paula Lois Spilner, "Ut Civitas Amplietur: Studies in Florentine Urban Development, 1282–1400" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1987), 61–64.
35. Corsi, *Rimatori*, 871. "[S]ì chè d'ogni altra piazza il pregio serra." The term *pregio* connoted economic, moral, and aesthetic value.
36. Ibid. "Ma queste e l'altre, se chiaro dicerno, / Niente son di frutte e di bellezza / e di ciò ch'a la gente dà governo."
37. Leon Battista Alberti makes a similar case when discussing the classical forum as a public space, where the gaze of elders helps to discipline the actions of youths. One of the functions of the piazza, therefore, was to embed sightlines for the disciplinary apparatus of vision. See Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1988), 8.6 (263).
38. Corsi, *Rimatori*, 876.

> [Q]uando è 'l tempo, molte contadine
> con pentole di latte fanno stuolo.
> Per carnasciale capponi e galline,
> partendosi di viver tra le zolle,vengono a farsi a' cittadin vicine.

39. On the triad of relatives, friends, and neighbors, see Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "Parenti, amici, vicini: Il territorio urbano di una famiglia mercantile nel xv secolo," *Quaderni storici* 33 (1976): 953–82. Published in English as "Kin, Friends, and Neighbors: The Urban Territory of a Merchant Family in 1400," in *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 68–93. These concepts are elaborated in D. V. Kent and F. W. Kent, *Neighbours and Neighbourhood in Renaissance Florence: The District of the Red Lion in the Fifteenth Century* (Locust Valley, N.Y.: J. J. Augustin, 1982). On friendship in general in Renaissance Florence, see D. V. Kent, *Friendship, Love, and Trust in Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009).
40. Universality often lay at the very core of idealized conceptions of the commune; see, for one example, Maria Consiglia De Matteis, *La "teologia politica comunale" di Remigio de' Girolami* (Bologna: Pàtron, 1977). The centrality of exclusionary practices in Florentine political life is sketched by Fabrizio Ricciardelli, *The Politics of Exclusion in Early Renaissance Florence*, Late Medieval and Early Modern Studies 12 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007). The profound but often permeable character of this exclusion is described nowhere better than in Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Retour à la cité: Les magnats de Florence, 1340–1440* (Paris: École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2006). For most of the fourteenth century, the breadth or narrowness of the office-holding class remains a meaningful index of real political access; see John M. Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus in Florentine Electoral Politics, 1280–1400* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).
41. Florentine statutes have various laws concerning activities in the Mercato Vecchio, as one of the city's principal public spaces. For example, see ASF, Statuti, 13 (Statutes of the Capitano del Popolo, 1355, in Tuscan translation), III, cxiiij; IV, xliiij, xlvii. Romolo Caggese, *Statuto del Capitano del Popolo degli anni 1322–25*, vol. 1 of *Statuti della Repubblica fiorentina*, ed. Giuliano Pinto, Francesco Salvestrini, and Andrea Zorzi (Florence: Olschki, 1999), I, xxvii, 31; Caggese, *Statuto del Podestà del anno 1325*, vol. 2 of *Statuti della Repubblica fiorentina*, III, xl, 184.
42. Corsi, *Rimatori*, 871. "E brievemente dico che son queste: / che quattro chiese ne' suo quattro canti / e 'n ogni canto ha due vie manifeste."
43. The area around the market was part of the planned reconstruction of Florence as the new capital of the Italian nation, which was abandoned when the capital was moved to Rome in 1870. On the destruction and rebuilding of the Mercato Vecchio neighborhood, see Guido Carocci, *Firenze scomparsa: Ricordi storico-artistici* (Rome: Multigrafica, 1979); Carocci, *Il Mercato Vecchio di Firenze: Ricordi e curiosità di storia e d'arte* (Florence: Istituto Professionale Leonardo da Vinci, 1975); Elena Tempestini, Dante Mattani, and Guido Carocci, *Il Mercato Vecchio: Quaranta immagini del centro di Firenze com'era sino al secolo scorso* (Florence: F. Cesati, 1997); Carlo Cresti, *Firenze, capitale mancata: Architettura e città dal piano Poggi a oggi*, Documenti di architettura 86 (Milan: Electa, 1995); Luciano Artusi and Vincenzo Giannetti, *"A Vita Nuova": Ricordi e vicende della grande operazione urbanistica che distrusse il centro storico di Firenze*, 2nd ed. (Florence: Lito Terrazzi, 1997).
44. On the social significance of Florentine *potenze*, see David Rosenthal, *Kings of the Street: Power, Community, and Ritual in Renaissance Florence* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015); Rosenthal, "The Genealogy of Empires: Ritual Politics and State Building in Early Modern Florence," *I Tatti Studies: Essays in the Renaissance* 8 (1999): 197–234; Rosenthal, "The Spaces of Plebeian Ritual and the Boundaries of Transgression," in *Renaissance Florence: A Social History*, ed. Roger J. Crum and John T. Paoletti (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 161–81.
45. I would like to thank Professor Mirella Loda of the Dipartimento degli Studi Storici e Geografici of the University of Florence, whose survey of the experience of foreign researchers in Florence helped me to understand this dynamic in its contemporary context.
46. Such an exchange was particularly pertinent to the inhabitants of the late medieval Italian city-state, which Randolph Starn has referred to as a republic of words, an experiment in city-building that required the endless production of texts. See Randolph Starn, "The Republican Regime of the 'Room of Peace' in Siena, 1338–40," *Representations* 18 (1987): 4–11.
47. A historical account of Savonarola's time in Florence can be found in Lauro Martines, *Fire in the City: Savonarola and the Struggle for Renaissance Florence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).
48. Ibid., 237.
49. Ibid., 278. In a forthcoming article, Daniel Zolli and Christopher Brown will analyze the complex politics and theater that surrounded this event.
50. This episode is recounted in Giovanni Villani, *Nuova cronica*, ed. Giuseppe Porta, vol. 2 (Parma: Fondazione Pietro Bembo / Ugo Guanda, 1990), IX, 176–77.
51. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori: Nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. Rosanna Bettarini, vol. 3 (Florence: Sansoni, 1971), 518; Vasari, *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, trans. Gaston du C. De Vere, vol. 1 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, distributed by Random House, 1996), 540. I would like to thank

Mark Rosen for bringing this anecdote in the *Lives* to my attention.

52. Vasari, *Le vite*, vol. 3, 518 (my translation).
53. Ibid.
54. Franco Sacchetti, *Il trecentonovelle*, ed. Valerio Marucci, Novellieri Italiani 6 (Rome: Salerno, 1996), 114, 11–13.
55. Ibid., 14–18.
56. Ibid., 30–31.
57. See page 122 and chapter 3, note 1.
58. *Paradiso* 15.97–99. "Fiorenza dentro da la cerchia antica / ond'ella toglie ancora e terza e nona / si stava in pace, sobria e pudica." Most trecento commentators on Dante locate these sounds as those made by the bells of the campanile of the Badia. Scarabelli, *Commento di Jacopo della Lana*; [Lanza], *L'ottimo commento*; Pietro Alighieri, *Petri Allegherii super Dantis ipsius genitoris Comoediam commentarium, nunc primum in lucem editum . . .* (Florence: G. Piatti, 1845); Benvenuto da Imola, *Benevenuti de Rambaldis de Imola comentum super Dantis Aldigherij Comoediam* (Florence: G. Barbèra, 1887); *Commento alla Divina Commedia d'anonimo fiorentino.* All of these commentators can be found at the Dartmouth Dante Project, http://dante.dartmouth.edu/.
59. Nicholas A. Eckstein, *The District of the Green Dragon: Neighbourhood Life and Social Change in Renaissance Florence* (Florence: Olschki, 1995), 6.
60. Bell ringing reflected the divisions and hierarchies by which groups were structured. See Corbin, *Village Bells*.
61. See chapter 3, note 13.
62. In his commentary on this passage, Jacopo della Lana notes that terce and nones were rung from the Badia, which also rang the hours of merchant labor. In this respect, Dante's Badia was dissociated from a particular kind of labor that included a large portion of unskilled Florentine laborers. As a result, it would not be surprising that this industry was regulated by a separate system of bells.
63. See chapter 2, note 50.
64. Robert Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 4, pt. 1, trans. Eugenio Dupré-Theseider, Superbiblioteca Sansoni (Florence: Sansoni, 1962), 311.
65. Marvin Trachtenberg, "What Brunelleschi Saw: Monument and Site at the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 47, no. 1 (1988): 16–17.
66. Robert Davidsohn, *Forschungen zur Geschichte von Florenz*, vol. 4 (Berlin: E. S. Mittler und Sohn, 1896), 494. Davidsohn cites a document from ASF, Libri fabarum, 9, fols. 41r–41v. Villani mentions that it was erected at the request of the cardinal legate messer Giovanni degli Orsini of Rome, the signore of the Badia. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, XI, 175. On the casting date of the bell, see Anne Leader, *The Badia of Florence: Art and Observance in a Renaissance Monastery* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 23.
67. These events are summarized in Leader, *Badia*, 21–23.
68. This integrated soundscape will be discussed in detail in chapter 3.
69. Enrico Malato, ed., *Il Trecento*, Storia della letteratura italiana 2 (Rome: Salerno, 1995), 856.
70. It is worth noting that the character of Dante believes that the tools he and the smith wield are comparable.
71. Sacchetti, *Il trecentonovelle*, 114, 32–34. "Il fabbro gonfiato, non sapendo rispondere, raccoglie le cose e tornò al suo lavorìo; e se volle cantare, cantò di Tristano e di Lancelotto e lasciò stare il Dante."
72. Marianne Shapiro, *De Vulgari Eloquentia: Dante's Book of Exile* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 61.
73. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, ed. and trans. Robert Drew Hicks, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), 4.36, 413.
74. In a real-life analogy, a specific law forbade the public scrutiny of merchants' account books as legal evidence even in cases of criminal convictions. See Caggese, *Statuto del Podestà del anno 1325*, II, 29 (101); "Statuti del Podestà (1355)," II, fols. 81v–82r. Exceptions were made for the petitions of creditors. The exception "nisi ad petitionem creditoris" is inexplicably missing from the 1355 edition of the statutes translated by Andrea Lancia under the rubric "Che mercatante non sia costretto di mostrare lo libro delle sue ragioni." The law guarded the right of all merchants and artisans to keep their account books private when they were condemned or exiled, including the quantity of his *ragioni* or his company, or even of the shop or the *tavola*. Foreign officials were to be fined for breaking this law. I am grateful to John Najemy for pointing out the difference in the two laws; in his judgment, the law makes no sense without the exception.
75. On Vasari's use of the *Anonimo Magliabechiano* as a source for the life of Botticelli and an argument for Vincenzo Borghini as its author, see Richard Stapleford, "Vasari and Botticelli," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 39, nos. 2/3 (1995): 397–408. For a critique of that position and an attribution to Bernardo Vecchietti, see Bouk Wierda, "The True Identity of the Anonimo Magliabechiano," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 53, no. 1 (2009): 157–68.
76. Stapleford, "Vasari and Botticelli," 399–400.
77. In terms of labor, production, and value, wool was still a major component of the city's economy by the latter half

of the sixteenth century, although, within an increasingly competitive and complex international textile trade economy in Europe, there were already signs of the industry's imminent precipitous decline at the beginning of the seventeenth century. See Richard A. Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 267–82.

78. Consider, for example, the fact that Raphael's autograph cartoons for the Sistine tapestries are much more prized as art objects than the tapestries themselves, which were many times more expensive. On the cartoons and the tapestries, see John K. G. Shearman, *Raphael's Cartoons in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen, and the Tapestries for the Sistine Chapel* (London: Phaidon, 1972). The increasingly perceived incompatibility between certain social and cultural practices in sixteenth-century Italy seems to have been part of a general trend toward the delineation and separation of certain refined activities of a more self-consciously serious and moralized elite. For example, David Rosenthal suggests that the riotous, expansive, and satirical carnival culture of the Florentine workers, as it was expressed in their festive brigades, known as *potenze*, was eventually suppressed and transformed in the early seventeenth century. This resulted from the impact of reform brought about by the collusion of both the clerical and social elite that figured prominently in the new ducal regime. See Rosenthal, "Spaces of Plebeian Ritual." Similarly, Philippe Canguilhem sees at the same time a parallel suppression of erotic and irreverent carnival songs in Florence and a valorization of poetic verse more suited to an intellectual humanist culture. See Philippe Canguilhem, "Courtiers and Musicians Meet in the Streets: The Florentine Mascherata Under Cosimo I," *Urban History* 37, no. 3 (2010): 464–73. In Venice, traditional rituals associated with carnival began to be seen as an embarrassment in the sixteenth century. See Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 156–81. In the Florentine cases, the target was the very class that produced many of the workers in the textile industry, so Vasari's story becomes emblematic of that productive incompatibility between artist and worker in both spatial and sonic terms. The representation of workers in a wool factory in the *studiolo* of Francesco I de' Medici, with their classically muscular bodies, seems to be an aestheticization of the industry along the same narratological lines, paired as it may have been with an image of the mythical discovery of the pigment Tyrian purple. As a result, the industry is reified into the cosmos of erudite materials and knowledge and detached from its tumultuous history within the Florentine economy and its politics. On the *studiolo*, see Scott J. Schaefer, "The Studiolo of Francesco I De' Medici in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence" (Ph.D. diss., Bryn Mawr College, 1976); Marco Dezzi Bardeschi, *Lo stanzino del principe in palazzo vecchio: I concetti, le immagini, il desiderio*, ed. Massimo Becattini (Florence: Le lettere, 1980); Karen Edwards, "Rethinking the Reinstallation of the Studiolo of Francesco I De' Medici in the Palazzo Vecchio" (Ph.D. diss., Case Western Reserve University, 2007).

79. Melius de Villiers, "Nuisances in Roman Law," 13 *Law Quarterly Review* (1897): 387–94. De Villiers claims that noise nuisance is not mentioned in the corpus of Roman law, except for a passage in the Codex (11.19) about noise bothering students.

> The prohibition which relates to the discharge into the air-space over a person's property of invisible matter affecting the health or the sense of smell, must no doubt be also extended to the immission therein of those vibrations of the air known as sound or other manifestations of the forces of nature, in so far as they detrimentally affect the comfort, and consequently the well-being, of such a person. It would probably not be allowable to focus the sun's rays upon a neighbour's property in such a manner as seriously to incommode him. With regard to offensive sound vibrations (in other words, noises), the Roman law lays down no specific rules generally; one can only seek to apply general principles. Commentators on that law do not leave the subject entirely untouched; but they mostly confine themselves to the case where noises are a source of disturbance and annoyance to students or professors; and they then base their comments on the legislation of Justinian as contained in the Title of the Code, "De studiis liberalibus urbis Romae et Constantinopolitanae." Provision is there merely made "ne discipuli se invicem possint obstrepere vel magistri, neve linguarum confusion permixta vel vocum aures quorundem vel mentes a studio litterarum avertat."

I would like to thank Robert Fredona for his help in situating noise within Roman law.

80. Martines, *Fire in the City*, 17; Shapiro, *De Vulgari*, 62.
81. Ubaldo Scotti, "La Piagnona di S. Marco in Firenze," in *L' illustratore fiorentino: Calendario Storico per l'Anno 1908*, ed. Guido Carocci (Florence: Tipografia domenicana, 1907), 52.
82. Martines, *Fire in the City*, 277.
83. These are Martines's translations.
84. Scotti, "La Piagnona," 56.

85. The sixteenth-century historians Benedetto Varchi and Scipione Ammirato, both of whom refer to the importance of this destructive act—the former as loss and the second as memory—use terms that have led subsequent commentators into complete confusion about which bell it was. Varchi was almost certainly referring to the "grossa" that Goro Dati mentions, which began as the Leone. The confusion comes from the fact that Bernardo Davanzati refers to the loss of the "campana del consiglio"; see Isidoro Del Lungo, *Dino Compagni e la sua Cronica*, vol. 2 (Florence: Le Monnier, 1879), 464. Varchi states that it rang for the council and called the *popolo* to *parlamenti*; Ammirato calls it the "grande campana del popolo"; see Benedetto Varchi, *Storia fiorentina*, ed. Lelio Arbib and Silvano Razzi, vol. 3 (Florence: Società ed. delle storie del Nardi e del Varchi, 1841), XIII, 9. It was the Campana del Popolo that called the council, but it was the Grossa, or Leone, that called *parlamenti*. Clearly, therefore, all were talking about the larger bell. By the late sixteenth century, Ammirato probably no longer understood the fine distinction between a bell that rang to call the representatives of the *popolo*, as ruling class, and a bell that called the whole city and spoke in a much more universal voice. Scipione Ammirato and Cristoforo del Bianco, *Istorie fiorentine di Scipione Ammirato*, vol. 6 (Florence: V. Batelli, 1846), bk. 31, 200.
86. Aurelio Gotti, *Storia del Palazzo Vecchio in Firenze* (Florence: Stabilimento G. Civelli, Editore, 1889), 31.
87. Gotti quotes Bernardo Davanzati, but it is Del Lungo who gives the precise reference as *Opere*, ed. Bindi, I, xix. See Del Lungo, *Dino Compagni*, 2:463. "A noi la campana del consiglio fu levata, acciò che non potessimo sentir più il dolce suono della liberta."
88. Del Lungo, *Dino Compagni*, 2:463; Gerhard Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 200.
89. Ammirato and Del Bianco, *Istorie fiorentine*, vol. 6, bk. 2, 87. The Leone, or Grossa, originally weighed over twelve thousand pounds, although some refer to it as weighing sixteen thousand pounds. It weighed twenty thousand pounds after its recasting in 1373. Dati claimed that it weighed twenty-two thousand pounds in the early fifteenth century, and Varchi repeats this claim in the early sixteenth century. Later in the sixteenth century, Ammirato records the claim by Cosimo I that it weighed twenty-seven thousand pounds.
90. Varchi, *Storia fiorentina*, XIII, 3:9. Varchi notes that the reason for destroying the bell—for money or to erase the memory of its power to rally the citizens—was a matter of debate among Florentines. Giuseppe Conti states that Alessandro put his own effigy on the coin and used this first minting to pay the German troops given to him by Charles V for the war against Florence. Notably, Conti sees this act, both practical and symbolic, as the beginning of Alessandro's tyranny. Cosimo II cast a new bell in 1615, which is the current *campanone*. Giuseppe Conti, *Firenze dopo i Medici: Francesco di Lorena, Pietro Leopoldo, inizio del regno di Ferdinando III* (Florence: Bemporad, 1921), 122.

Chapter 2

1. The evening bell, common in cities since the late Middle Ages, was still rung in a triple sequence in nineteenth-century France when reconstituted after the Revolution. See Alain Corbin, *Les cloches de la terre: Paysage sonore et culture sensible dans les campagnes au XIXe siècle* (Paris: A. Michel, 1994), translated by Martin Thom as *Village Bells: Sound and Meaning in the Nineteenth-Century French Countryside*, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 38.
2. Davidsohn, *Storia*, vol. 4, pt. 1, 310.
3. For an analysis of the bell tower as an architectural genre that focuses on medieval Rome, see Ann Edith Priester, "The Belltowers of Medieval Rome and the Architecture of 'Renovatio'" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1990); Priester, "Bell Towers and Building Workshops in Medieval Rome," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 52, no. 2 (1993): 199–220; Priester, "The Italian Campanile: Where Did It Come From?," in *Pratum Romanum: Richard Krautheimer zum 100. Geburtstag*, ed. Richard Krautheimer and Renate L. Colella (Wiesbaden: Dr. L. Reichert, 1997), 259–76; Giuliano Valdes, *Guida ai campanili della Garfagnana: Guida alla valle* (San Giuliano Terme [Pisa]: Felici, 2005); Tudy Sammartini and Daniele Resini, *Venice from the Bell Towers* (London: Merell, 2002); Rita Romanelli, "'Cose lunghe come campanili': Fortuna e carattere delle torri medievali di Ravenna," *Arte medievale*, 2nd ser., nos. 12–13 (2000): 49–64; Massimo Bortoloti, ed., *Campane e campanili in Friuli: Atti del convegno di studio, Udine 7* (Tavagnacco [Udine]: Arti Grafiche Friulane, 1998); Guglielmo Lera and Marcello Lera, eds., *Sulle vie del primo giubileo: Campane e campanili nel territorio delle diocesi di Luni, Lucca, Pisa* (Cinisello [Milan]: Silvana Editoriale, 1998); Mario Fanti, ed., *Campanili e campane di Bologna e del bolognese* (Bologna: Grafis, 1992); Santino Spartà, *I campanili di roma: Un itinerario inusitato di fede, curiosità e arte attraverso le torri campanarie antiche e moderne, elementi inscindibili delle chiese romane e del panorama della città*, Quest'italia 42 (Rome: Newton Compton, 1983). For

architectural histories of specific bell towers, see Marvin Trachtenberg, *The Campanile of Florence Cathedral: "Giotto's Tower"* (New York: New York University Press, 1971); Sarah McPhee, *Bernini and the Bell Towers: Architecture and Politics at the Vatican* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); Emanuela Andreatta, "Le vicende costruttive e i restauri del campanile della chiesa di Santo Spirito a Firenze," *Antichità viva* 36, no. 1 (1997): 64–79; Klaus Tragbar, "Il campanile del duomo di Siena e le torri gentilizie della citta'," *Bulletino senese di storia patria* 102 (1995): 159–86; Timothy Verdon, "'Turris Davidica': Il campanile e l'immagine di Firenze," in *Alla riscoperta di piazza del duomo in Firenze 3. Il campanile di Giotto*, ed. Timothy Verdon (Florence: Centro Di, 1992), 17–40. For general information on the church bell towers of Florence, see Walter Paatz and Elisabeth Valentiner Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz: Ein kunstgeschichtliches Handbuch*, 5 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: V. Klostermann, 1940–53).

4. *L'enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, s.v. "Campana."
5. In fact, according to the *Liber Pontificalis*, Pope Stephen II (752–757) donated three bells and erected a tower on the west side of the atrium of Saint Peter's in Rome corresponding to the principal entrance of the basilica. See Elisabetta Neri, *De campanis fundendis: La produzione di campane nel medioevo tra fonti scritte ed evidenze archeologiche* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2006), 11.
6. Giovanni Villani, *Nuova cronica*, ed. Giuseppe Porta, vol. 1 (Parma: Fondazione Pietro Bembo / Ugo Guanda, 1990), III, 124.
7. Neri, *De campanis*, 3–5. Neri points out that in this region there is evidence of late republican and early imperial Roman bronze casting of what was known as the *vasa campana*. The term denotes a certain shape and provenance of a household object. However, there is no archaeological evidence that bells originated there, although the term *campana* dates back to the sixth century and is found in the *Anecdota Casinensa*, ed. August Reifferscheid (Wrocław, 1871), I. Bells were also called *signum*. Later, in the ninth century, Saint Paolino of Nola was designated as the inventor of the bell, and bells of small dimensions were called *nolae* from that time. *Tintinnabula*, or small bells, were used in ancient Rome to open markets and baths, which is attested to by Martial in his *Epigrammata* 14, 163, vol. 1. As late as the fourth century, John Chrysostom warned against the use of bells, which suggests that their liturgical use was not yet established.
8. Documentary evidence links bells to the call for prayer only as far back as the ninth and tenth centuries, though an earlier date seems possible. The practice may have come from the exchange between the Islamic and Christian world in the Near East, where there are numerous indications of religious buildings with towers. See Neri, *De campanis*, 10.
9. A bell on the column of the Mercato Vecchio opened and closed the market. See Mariano Bianca and Francesca Di Marco, *I mercati nella storia di Firenze: Dal forum romano al centro alimentare polivalente* (Florence: Loggia de' Lanzi, 1995), 139. I would like to thank John Ritter for referring me to this source.
10. Neri, *De campanis*, 6. According to Neri, the first evidence of the liturgical use of bells dates to the sixth century in the monastic setting and is found in the sixth-century Rule of Saint Benedict. It was not until the papacy of Sabinian (604–606) that bells are included specifically as Christian symbols.
11. Gerhard Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 39.
12. First located on small, elevated structures next to the church, on its gable or façade, by the eighth century bells were widespread. The increasing references to towers suggest that the bells were getting larger in order to gather people from farther afield. See Fernand Cabrol and Henri Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1907), 1978. Gregory of Tours refers to a bell hanging in a tower that Saint Martin used to call the people in the fifth-century church of Saint Martin at Tours. Priester speculates that this was a lantern tower above the crossing, surmounted by a wooden turret for the bell. She refers to an inscription above the entrance to the church that exhorted the faithful to lift their gaze to the tower, from where Saint Martin called the people. See Priester, "Bell Towers," 116.
13. This is evident in the collective pealing of vespers on evenings before feast days, which themselves had a unique sequence of rings from the bells of the Florentine cathedral, and the widespread practice of sounding the Ave Maria in the evening, signaling a time of collective prayer. Domenico Moreno, *Mores et consuetudines ecclesiae florentinae* (Florence: Tipografia Pietro Allegrini), 1–2; Franklin Toker, *On Holy Ground: Liturgy, Architecture, and Urbanism in the Cathedral and the Streets of Medieval Florence*, Florence Duomo Project 1 (London: Harvey Miller; Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 268ff. For an analysis of this document within the liturgical practices of the Duomo, see Marica Tacconi, *Cathedral and Civic Ritual in Late Medieval and Renaissance Florence: The Service Books of Santa Maria del Fiore* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 79–135.

14. Neri, *De campanis*, 10–11.
15. Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 197.
16. Blake McDowell Wilson, *Music and Merchants: The Laudesi Companies of Republican Florence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 70. Wilson suggests that Antonio Pucci's literary output facilitated a cross-fertilization of genres for reading publics through his authorship of sensuous love lyrics and variations on the gospels for popular singing.
17. On the tower's construction history and symbolism, see Giuseppe Rocchi, "Interpretazione del campanile," in *S. Maria del Fiore: Rilievi, documenti, indagini strumentali; Interpretazioni; Piazza, battistero, campanile*, ed. Giuseppe Rocchi (Florence: Dipartimento di storia dell'architettura e restauro delle strutture architettoniche, Università degli studi di Firenze, 1996); Trachtenberg, *Campanile of Florence Cathedral*, 86–106; Trachtenberg, "Brunelleschi, 'Giotto' and Rome," in *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Craig Hugh Smyth*, ed. Andrew Morrogh, Fiorella Superbi Gioffredi, Piero Morselli, and Eve Borsook (Florence: Giunti Barbèra, 1985). On finances, see Margaret Haines, "Firenze e il finanziamento della cattedrale e del campanile," in *Alla riscoperta di Piazza del Duomo in Firenze: Saggi per una lettura storico-artistico-religiosa dei suoi monumenti*, vol. 3, *Il campanile di Giotto*, ed. Timothy Verdon (Florence: Centro Di, 1994), 71–83. On the meaning of the sculpture program, see Haines, ed., *Santa Maria del Fiore: The Cathedral and Its Sculpture* (Fiesole, Florence: Cadmo, 2001), 89–106; Wolfgang Braunfels, "Giottos Campanile," *Das Münster* 1 (1948): 193–210; Julius von Schlosser, "Giustos Fresken in Padua und die Vorläufer der Stanza dell Segnatura," *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 17 (1896): 13–100.
18. Since the tower on the left displays no openings, it appears, at first, to be a more regular tower with battlements, unless the vaguely defined shape on its top is, in fact, a belfry.
19. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, XII, vol. 3, 52–53.
20. Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, *Cronaca fiorentina*, ed. L. A. Muratori, Rerum italicarum scriptores 30, no. 1 (Città di Castello: S. Lapi, 1903), 176 (rubric 503).
21. Antonio Pucci, *Il centiloquio, che contiene la Cronica di Giovanni Villani in terza rima*, in *Delle poesie di Antonio Pucci, celebre versificatore fiorentino del* MCCC*, e prima, della Cronica di Giovanni Villani ridotta in terza rima*, vol. 4, ed. Ildefonso de San Luigi, Delizie degli eruditi toscani 6 (Florence: Gaetano Cambiagi, 1775), 119–20.
22. *Commento alla Divina Commedia d'anonimo fiorentino del secolo* XIV*, ora per la prima volta stampato a cura di Pietro Fanfani*, *Purgatorio* 11; Pucci, *Il centiloquio*, 94–96.
23. Gregorio Dati, "Istoria di Firenze," in *Firenze contro Milano: Gli intellettuali fiorentini nelle guerre con i Visconti (1390–1440)*, ed. Antonio Lanza (Anzio [Rome]: De Rubeis, 1991), VII, 5, 264–65.
24. Ibid.
25. Benedetto Dei, *La cronica: Dall'anno 1400 all'anno 1500*, ed. Roberto Barducci (Florence: F. Papafava, 1985), 108–9.
26. Leonardo Bruni, *History of the Florentine People*, ed. and trans. James Hankins, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), VI, 47, 198.
27. Alexander Nagel, "Authorship and Image-Making in the Monument to Giotto in Florence Cathedral," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, nos. 53/54 (2008): 143.
28. Quoted in Trachtenberg, *Campanile of Florence Cathedral*, 7. "Miraris turrem egregiam sacro aere sonantem / Haec quoque de modulo crevit ad astra meo." Timothy Verdon translates the first line as "Admire the extraordinary tower that resounds in the sacred heavens." See Verdon, "Turris Davidica," 20.
29. Verdon, "Turris Davidica," 85.
30. Rocchi, "Interpretazione del campanile," 129.
31. Trachtenberg sees the tower's imagery as a celebration of Florentine urban culture guided by divine forces from above, representing a visual analogue to Villani's exuberant description of Florence in 1338. See Trachtenberg, *Campanile of Florence Cathedral*, 86–106.
32. Such sculptural cycles exist on the baptistery in Pisa, the cathedral of Lucca, and the Pieve of Santa Maria in Arezzo, to name only several in the vicinity of Florence.
33. Trachtenberg interprets the tower as a folded façade whose dimensions intertwine spatially with the baptistery and cathedral façades. See Trachtenberg, *Campanile of Florence Cathedral*, 98.
34. Niall Atkinson, "Architecture, Anxiety, and the Fluid Topographies of Renaissance Florence" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2009), 187.
35. The order to install the bells dates to January 30, 1358, and on February 16, the contract was drawn up for the actual hanging. See Cesare Guasti, *Santa Maria del Fiore* (Florence: Tipografia di M. Ricci, 1887), 116.
36. "Libro di deliberazioni e stanziamenti del opera di santa reparata," in ASF, Carte strozziane, IIa serie, 78, fols. 11–12. The construction site of the cathedral also had its own special work bell, which rang around the twenty-fourth hour (at nightfall), before which workers on the site could not leave work. This suggests that the usual hour for the cessation of labor was not always at darkness. See [Andrea Lancia], *L'ottimo commento della Divina Commedia [Andrea Lancia]: Testo inedito d'un contemporaneo di Dante . . .* , ed. Alessandro Torri (Pisa: N. Capurro, 1827–29), 40.

37. Trachtenberg, *Campanile of Florence Cathedral*, 119.
38. Fiorella Facchinetti and Maria Rosaria Trappolini, "Il campanile della Badia fiorentina," in *S. Maria del fiore e le chiese fiorentine del duecento e del trecento nella città delle fabbriche arnolfiane*, ed. Giuseppe Rocchi Coopmans de Yoldi (Florence: Alinea, 2004), 273.
39. Archivio dell'Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore (AOSMF), I.3.8. It can also be found in Moreno, *Mores*, 1; Toker, *On Holy Ground*, 268. According to a sixteenth-century manuscript held in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, there were seven bells in the 1520s. See BNCF, *Nuovi acquisti*, 987. I am indebted to Nicholas Eckstein for referring me to this manuscript.
40. Robert Davidsohn, *Firenze ai tempi di Dante* (Florence: Bemporad & Figlio, 1929), 104.
41. Simone della Tosa, "Annali," in *Cronichette antiche di varj scrittori del buon secolo della lingua toscana*, ed. Domenico Maria Manni (Florence, 1733), 157.
42. Cf. the contemporary account of these political struggles in Dino Compagni, *Dino Compagni's Chronicle of Florence*, ed. Daniel E. Bornstein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986). For a historical account of the political strife at the turn of the fourteenth century, see John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200–1575* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006), 63–95.
43. Trachtenberg, *Campanile of Florence Cathedral*, 106–7. The scholastic sources quoted by Trachtenberg are Hugh of Saint Victor, *Speculum de Mysteriis Ecclesiae*, I (Patrologiae Latina CLXXVII); Gulielmus Durandus, *The Rationale Divinorum Officiorum: The Foundational Symbolism of the Early Church, Its Structure, Decoration, Sacraments and Vestments* (Louisville, Ky.: Fons Vitae, 2007), I, 4; IV, 6; Honorius of Autun, *De campanis significatio* (H. Augustodunensis, Gemma anamae), bk. I, 5 (Patriologiae Latina CLXXII, 544ff.).
44. On the ritual of symbolic rather than actual baptism, see *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Bells."
45. Richard C. Trexler, *Synodal Law in Florence and Fiesole, 1306–1518* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1971), 30–31.
46. Moreno, *Mores*, 1; Toker, *On Holy Ground*, 268.
47. Moreno, *Mores*, 2; Toker, *On Holy Ground*, 268. The Squillonem may have been a larger but still relatively modest bell.
48. For these seasonal regulations, see Moreno, *Mores*, 5–28; Toker, *On Holy Ground*, 270–71. Note that the observance of feast days began at vespers on the previous day.
49. Moreno, *Mores*, 15; Toker, *On Holy Ground*, 271.
50. *Paradiso* 15.97–99. See chapter 1. According to Davidsohn, along with terce and nones, the Badia also announced sext, which was theoretically the middle of the day. However, as was common throughout Europe, nones and vespers had shifted gradually to an earlier time of the day by the later Middle Ages. See Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 30–33. In other words, these represented the principal divisions of the secular day, since most activities of state and labor were calibrated to them, such as the opening and closing of the courts and the beginning of the workday. See Davidsohn, *Storia*, 312.
51. Trexler, *Synodal Law*, 31. Mendicant churches were also exempt.
52. Moreno, *Mores*, 7–8; Toker, *On Holy Ground*, 269–70.
53. Moreno, *Mores*, 8–10; Toker, *On Holy Ground*, 269–70.
54. Moreno, *Mores*, 10–14; Toker, *On Holy Ground*, 270. The time of this ring is not specified but most likely would have occurred toward evening, after the long and complex liturgy of Holy Saturday.
55. Moreno, *Mores*, 14 (editor's note). Since the ordinal itself is older, the custom was practiced in Florence at least since the thirteenth century.
56. Ibid..
57. Ringing *a distesa* meant that bells were made to swing in order to generate a more syncopated and exuberant sound than ringing *a stormo* or *a martello*, where the hammer repeatedly struck a stationary bell in a regular rhythm. There must have been some subtle but significant difference between *a martello* and *a stormo*, the latter used primarily to assemble armed men together, the former for danger and general assembly. They are listed separately in a Bolognese manual, but only the method of *a martello* is described specifically, leading one to believe that they often overlapped. See Evaristo Stefanelli, *Campanili, campane e campanari di Bologna* (Rovigo: Istituto padano di arti grafiche, 1975), 2.
58. Moreno, *Mores*, 21; Toker, *On Holy Ground*, 121, 272.
59. Toker, *On Holy Ground*, 123.
60. Moreno, *Mores*, 23; Toker, *On Holy Ground*, 272.
61. Edward Muir, "The Virgin on the Street Corner: The Place of the Sacred in Italian Cities," in *Religion and Culture in the Renaissance and Reformation*, ed. Steven E. Ozment (Kirksville, Mo.: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1989), 162. Muir uses the example of the Feast of the Magi, where three of the city's quarters chose a "king" to participate in the procession that took place in the fourth, distributing the contents of the sacred in much the same way the central government divided offices. For instance, the *banditori* were chosen from each of the city's four districts.
62. New laws have generally been the focus of political historians of Florence, while Trexler has pointed to the

importance of flags for understanding political struggle. As of yet, bells have not been treated as a fundamental element of government attempts to create and control spatial jurisdictions. See Richard C. Trexler, "Follow the Flag: The Ciompi Revolt Seen from the Streets," in *The Workers of Renaissance Florence*, Power and Dependence in Renaissance Florence 3 (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1993), 30–60, originally published in *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et renaissance* 46 (1984): 357–92.

63. Fanelli locates 173 such towers documented between the twelfth and the fourteenth centuries. See Giovanni Fanelli, *Firenze, architettura e città* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1973), 30–31. For a description of the main features of the visual profile of the city before the building of the communal towers, see Davidsohn, *Storia*, I, 1087–88.
64. For an analysis of the relations between political conflicts and urban development, see Loris Macci and Valeria Orgera, *Architettura e civiltà delle torri: Torri e famiglie nella Firenze medievale* (Florence: Edifir, 1994).
65. Najemy, *History of Florence*, 66.
66. Ibid., 67.
67. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, VII, 39, vol. 1, 328.
68. On historical methods of bell casting, see Neri, *De campanis*. Bells were still a major but necessary expense in the nineteenth century. See Corbin, *Village Bells*, 80–93.
69. Davidsohn, *Storia*, II, pt. 1, 512–13.
70. For the identification of the tower, see ibid., II, 512; Davidsohn, *Forschungen*, I, 122; Macci and Orgera, *Architettura e civiltà*, 112–14. The latter locate the tower, reconstructed after the Second World War, at via Por Santa Maria 97. The lion heads on the façade may have been the origin of the tower's name.
71. The Amidei family and their centrally located neighborhood figured prominently in this politically charged myth of the Florentine *popolo*. The "Buondelmonte murder" was a story that laid the blame for Florentine factionalism squarely at the feet of warring upper-class clans. The bloody feud, which began with an innocuous dinner insult and escalated to a knife fight, was supposed to have been ameliorated by marriage but ended in conspiracy and murder. It was also used to explain the origins of the Guelf and Ghibelline factional divisions in Florence. The earliest extant text of the Buondelmonte murder is recounted in "Die sogenannte Chronik des Brunetto Latini," in *Quellen und Forschungen zur ältesten Geschichte der Stadt Florenz*, ed. Otto von Hartwig, vol. 2 (Marburg: Elwert, 1880), 223–35. According to the Pseudo-Latini chronicle, the conspirators met at the family's nearby parish church of Santa Maria Sopra Porta. The area had been dishonored by Buondelmonte's snub, as he rode through the neighborhood on his way to claim a rival bride and would have reinforced the purgative nature of the pact made to counter it. The place of dishonor was important because it was familial space and needed to be ritually cleansed. This occurred at the foot of the bridge on the edge of the neighborhood, where the murder took place. Giovan Battista Uccelli believes that this torre del Leone was the one referred to in Florentine statutes that named the tower near the church of Santo Stefano as representing the height limit for any private towers, i.e., fifty *braccia*. This would just add to the increasing appropriation and symbolic burden the tower was assuming as it was being transformed into the alter ego of the *platea ubertorum*. See Giovan Battista Uccelli, *Il Palazzo del Podestà: Illustrazione storica* (Florence: Tipografia delle Murate, 1865), 109.
72. The story was already ingrained within public memory as a structuring narrative of communal identity by the time Dante lamented the violence unleashed by Buondelmonte's snub in *Paradiso* 16.136–47. Around 1311, Dino Compagni used the story to emphasize the breakdown in the social order it caused. Compagni, *Chronicle*, bk. 1, chap. 2, 6–7. Cf. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, VI, 38, vol. 1, 267–69. For a discussion of all the versions of the story, see N. P. J. Gordon, "The Murder of Buondelmonte: Contesting Place in the Early Fourteenth-Century Florentine Chronicles," *Renaissance Studies* 20, no. 4 (2006): 459–77. On the culture of Florentine magnates and their relations with the *popolo*, see Gaetano Salvemini, *Magnati e popolani in Firenze dal 1280 al 1295*, Istituto di studi superiore pratici e di perfezionamento in Firenze: Sezione di filosofia e filologia 27 (Florence: G. Carnesecchi, 1899), chaps. 1–6; Carol Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Retour à la cité: Les magnats de Florence, 1340–1440* (Paris: École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2006); Najemy, *History of Florence*, 63–95.
73. Rubinstein cites the sources that locate the palaces of the Capitano and the Esecutore around the site of the Palazzo Vecchio. See Nicolai Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298–1532: Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, Oxford-Warburg Studies (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 16, 87. Councils had already been meeting in the nearby church of San Piero Scheraggio.
74. Dati, "Istoria," VIII, 260–76.
75. Davidsohn, *Storia*, II, 513. This had strong historical symbolism, since the Palace of the Amidei was attacked by Guelf partisans not long before 1241. See Pietro Santini,

"Studi sull'antica costituzione del commune di Firenze," *Archivio storico italiano*, 5th ser., 32, no. 3 (1903): 315–16. The spatial symbolism of the struggle against the upper classes was already part of the topography of this area. Combined with the proximity of the Buondelmonte murder and the destruction of the Uberti property, this zone was fast becoming a memorial to the *popolo*'s long struggle. This may also have played a part in the unresolved issue of why the Palazzo Vecchio was built where it was. It was also a monument to battles lost.

76. The torre del Leone seems to have initiated the Florentine tradition of turning private defensive towers into public *campanili*, which was both a political statement and a practical way of saving time and money. Joining it were the two main civic towers of the city, the Foraboschi tower (Palazzo Vecchio) and that of the Bargello (Volognona). The name of the largest civic bell named in the 1355 statutes, the Leone, which was hung in the Palazzo Vecchio, may be a reference to the memory of this first bell.
77. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, VII, 78, vol. 1, 379–80.
78. Ibid., VII, 75, vol. 1, 370; Davidsohn, *Storia*, II, 573. It was mentioned as the *campana di guerra* (war bell) as early as 1123, when the city went to war against Fiesole. Davidsohn, *Storia*, I, 1025–26.
79. The Bargello may not have been the first communal palace in Florence. Santini refers to the destruction of the Palace of the Commune and the residence of the *podestà* in political battles in 1236. See Santini, "Studi," 58. Santini quotes a Latin chronicler who refers to the "palatium communis florentini et palatium filiorum Galigai," but he makes the point that the text might refer to the same edifice, since the *podestà* and the councils were meeting in various places throughout the city. According to Villani's geography of Guelfs and Ghibellines in Florence, they were always meeting in the houses of Ghibelline families. See Villani, *Nuova cronica*, VI, 39, vol. 1, 269–71.
80. It is likely that the Bargello gradually took over the acoustic jurisdiction of the bells ringing around the area of Por Santa Maria, discussed above. The bell in the torre del Leone was probably moved, since it was used to call councils to the palace. On the itinerant regime, see Luca Giorgi and Pietro Matracchi, "Il Bargello a Firenze: Da Palazzo del Podestà a Museo Nazionale," in *S. Maria del Fiore: Teorie e storie dell'archeologia e del restauro nella città delle fabbriche Arnolfiane*, ed. Giuseppe Rocchi Coopmans de Yoldi (Florence: Alinea Editrice, 2006), 125. Other families at whose properties the councils met were the Galigai, the Abati—whose houses were located around the Mercato Vecchio—and the Soldanieri, whose tower was on the present via della Scala.
81. According to recent interventions, the first two levels of the Bargello's bell tower belonged to this preexisting structure. See ibid., 132. In fact, both religious and civic towers in Florence were, for the most part, structurally and symbolically distinct from the buildings to which their bells called people on various occasions. This was a distinctive feature of the Italian church campanile, which was, by and large, an independent monument with no fixed topographical relationship to the church it served. See Priester, "Italian Campanile," 259. This meant that they made up an independent network of sound-making nodes that linked the city to the buildings they served. Of the four principal Florentine *campanili*, those of the cathedral and the Badia are separate structures, while those of the two communal palaces were private family towers that predated the construction of those palaces and were heightened and renovated to perform their new tasks of public address.
82. Uccelli, *Palazzo del Podestà*, 50–54.
83. Ibid., 161.
84. Giorgi and Matracchi, "Il Bargello," 132.
85. At some point, however, this project was abandoned, possibly because of the extent to which the tower leans to the east, where it was necessary to reinforce it by the construction of the walls along via Ghibellina. See ibid., 141.
86. Ibid. On the fire, see Villani, *Nuova cronica*, XI, 183, vol. 2, 748. Such a date is significant because it corresponds to the time, in 1330, when the Badia was rebuilding its bell tower after having suffered its destruction in 1307 by order of the commune. These two towers are literally across the street from each other, and they represent a kind of symbolic confrontation between two institutions that were intimately bound to urban life. When the monks rebuilt their tower with financial help from the commune, they built it to a height just beyond that of the Bargello. This was assumed to have been a prudent assertion of institutional identity. However, since the commune raised its own tower just around this time to its present height, it may have had plans to supersede the height of the Badia's tower, which would have changed the dynamics of height entirely.
87. Alessandro Gherardi, *Le consulte della repubblica fiorentina dall' anno* MCCLXXX *al* MCCXCVIII, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Florence: Sansoni, 1896), 166, 262.
88. This must have been the successor to the Martinella. It was now housed in the recently raised tower of the Podestà.
89. "[S]ex campanari campane d. Capitanei." Gherardi, *Le consulte*, vol. 1, 483 and 488.
90. In 1295, a decree ordered the casting of a bell for the Palace of the Commune, the common way of referring to the Podestà, although the decree was actually made by the

Capitano, who resided elsewhere. See Uccelli, *Palazzo del Podestà*, 162. Since the Bargello always seemed to have two functioning bells, older ones may have been recast or moved, but it is impossible to say with any certainty.

91. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, IX, 65, vol. 2, 121–22. In this capacity, the Montanina may have rung to call the *podestà*'s emissaries. See Uccelli, *Palazzo del Podestà*, 163.
92. According to Leonardo Bruni, Florentine forces, allied with Lucca, besieged the city of Pistoia once again in 1303, where the White faction's exiles had sought refuge and were controlling the city. However, since the exiles refused to come out and fight, the Florentines laid waste to the territory instead. Bruni, *History of the Florentine People*, 1:415. Therefore, the destruction of Montale and the abduction of its bell were carried out in a spirit of frustration in order to weaken the enemy's defenses as well as damage its sonic identity.
93. Corbin, *Village Bells*, 69.
94. Uccelli, *Palazzo del Podestà*, 162.
95. Ibid. It was recast by Ricco di Lapo, the same bell maker who had recast a bell at San Miniato al Monte in 1398. By this time the Bargello was the seat of the city's tribunals. The inscription is significant since bells are conventionally inscribed with the names of saints, the Virgin, and the caster.
96. Ibid., 161.
97. It was sold to the Florentines for 1,700 florins by Pietro de' Bardi, the owner of the fortress. However, this bell was placed on the roof of the Palazzo Vecchio, according to Villani.
98. Uccelli, *Palazzo del Podestà*, 163–64. Uccelli identifies the times it rang under Cosimo I as 10 P.M. in the winter, midnight in the summer. He also writes that this bell was rung from 10:45 to 11 A.M. up to 1847, for those condemned to forced labor or to the stocks between 10 and 11. It was finally taken down in 1847 when the events for which it rang ceased to occur. It was saved from destruction and raised from the vault in the tower, where its excessive weight made it a potential hazard, and remounted in the belfry, where it still hung in Uccelli's time (1865). It was baptized with the Magdalene's name and therefore was often referred to as the Maddalena. Popular rhymes, as in this case, also testify to the pervasive role that the sounds of bells played in Florentine daily life. "Ti dia la Maddalena" meant that one was going to be subjected to the *forche*. It was also referred to as the *Margherita*, *la furba*, *il tabellaccio* (likely from *tabelliones* = messengers, or the pejorative of *tabella* for its ear-piercing tone, which would have made it the antithesis of the Montanina that was first brought to the city).
99. Aurelio Gotti, *Storia del Palazzo Vecchio in Firenze* (Florence: Stabilimento G. Civelli, Editore, 1889), 31. "Essere come la campana del Bargello che suona per il vitupero."
100. The architectural implications of the ordinances and the construction of Florentine civic spaces are discussed in Atkinson, "Architecture, Anxiety," 41–116. Cf. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, IX, 1, vol. 2, 9–12. On the long-term political effects of four successive waves of popular governmental reform, see Najemy, *History of Florence*, chaps. 3, 5, 6.
101. Gherardi, *Le consulte*, vol. 2, 428.
102. Ibid., IV, vii–ix, vol. 2, 437.
103. Gherardi, *Le consulte*, vol. 2, 454.
104. These provisions are published in ibid., vol. 2, 454ff. Cf. Gotti, *Palazzo Vecchio*, 27–28. It is notable that it was the Capitano who proposed the casting of the bell, since his own bell had been linked to the protection of this governmental body. The bell of justice could very well have been that original bell of the *primo popolo*, which had hung on the torre del Leone.
105. A perfect example is the recast Montanina, whose various names resulted from the things for which it was rung.
106. Compagni, *Chronicle*, II, 19, p. 47.
107. Gotti, *Palazzo Vecchio*, 29.
108. Trachtenberg, "What Brunelleschi Saw," 15.
109. Evidence that the Capitano had his own bell and tower comes from legislation authorizing the construction of an "edificium campane" for the Capitano for as much as sixty florins in 1290. See Gherardi, *Le consulte*, vol. 1, 434. The Capitano's tower is referred to as the "Bocca di Ferro" by Artusi and Lasciarrea, who also believe that the bell of the *popolo* originally hung in this tower of the Capitano. See Luciano Artusi and Roberto Lasciarrea, *Campane, torri, e campanili di Firenze* (Florence: Le Lettere, 2008), 35.
110. Gotti, *Palazzo Vecchio*, 29. Gotti believes that the Palace of the Capitano referred to here is in fact the Palace of the Cerchi, where the priors were meeting. However, why would the provision refer to a tower (*turrim*) in this case and not otherwise?
111. Gotti, *Palazzo Vecchio*, 28.
112. Davidsohn, *Forschungen*, IV, 501. Trachtenberg points out that this is the first mention of the large bell in the completed tower. Trachtenberg, "What Brunelleschi Saw," 18. The document also refers to the *campana populi*, which would figure as the second major bell of the same tower in the statutes drawn up at midcentury.
113. Davidsohn, *Forschungen*, IV, 500. Cf. Trachtenberg, "What Brunelleschi Saw," 17. Trachtenberg, citing Davidsohn, uses these documents to argue for changes in the design of the palace's tower.
114. Trachtenberg, "What Brunelleschi Saw," 17.

115. Ibid., 18; Davidsohn, *Forschungen*, IV, 500; Carl Frey, *Die Loggia dei Lanzi zu Florenz* (Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz, 1885), 198, doc. 74.
116. Trachtenberg, "What Brunelleschi Saw," 18.
117. Bells were meaningful as particular sounds, serving particular functions and ringing at certain times. In terms of the flexibility of memory, listeners might be able to retune their ears to accept newly cast bells ringing for old reasons. Similarly, the same bells ringing at different times could be identified with other names.
118. In all likelihood, this was the original bell of the priors that had been on the Palazzo de' Cerchi.
119. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, XIII, 36, vol. 3, 382.
120. For an analysis of the rise of the popular government of 1343–48, which was formed on the heels of the expulsion of the duke of Athens amid a series of financial and political crises brought on by elite policies, conspiracies, and political decisions, see Najemy, *History of Florence*, 138–44.
121. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, XII, 118, vol. 3, 234.
122. This may be the same bell that Uccelli refers to as the "Mangona," since both were brought from castles in 1337. However, Messer Benuccio Salimbeni da Siena sold the castles of both Vernio and Mangona to the Bardi clan. Ibid., XII, 74, 118, vol. 3, 163, 233. After the conspiracy of 1340, in which the Bardi were implicated, the castle, in which the Bardi were besieged, was forcibly sold to Florence for 4,860 florins, and a new law decreed that no citizens could hold fortresses within twenty miles of the border of the city's *distretto*.
123. Ibid., XIII, 36, vol. 3, 382.
124. Gotti, *Palazzo Vecchio*, 30.
125. Dohrn–van Rossum states that the "development or the invention of the mechanical clock . . . can be considered to have been more thoroughly researched than any other aspect of the history of technology prior to the industrial revolution. And yet no place, time, or circumstances have ever been pinpointed." Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 46. Most commentators date the development to the later thirteenth or early fourteenth century. Clock historian Giuseppe Brusa cites Guglielmus Durandus's *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* (1284) as the first documented description of a mechanical clock. Giuseppe Brusa, "L'arte dell'orologeria in Italia—i primi duecento anni," *La voce di Hora*, no. 2 (1996): 18. Public clocks, which were rare before the end of the fifteenth century, visually or aurally (or both) marked the hours of the entire day, more often than not, for city-dwellers. The first recorded public clock is that found in Orvieto in 1307–8, and there are only ten cities that record public clocks before Florence. However, according to Dohrn–van Rossum, the first securely documented public mechanical clock that continuously struck the modern hours was the one commissioned by Azzo Visconti in Milan in 1336. Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 130. On the earliest public clocks, see ibid., 128–34. Florence paid a local clockmaker three hundred florins to install its first public clock in the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio in 1353. See Mario Fondelli, *Gli "oriuoli mechanici" di Filippo di ser Brunellesco Lippi: Documenti e notizie inedite sull'arte dell'orologeria a Firenze* (Florence: Le Lettere, 2000), 4–5. The document cited by Fondelli is ASF, Provvisioni 40, fols. 175r–175v, November, 20, 1353. "Niccolao Bernardi popoli Sancti Fridiani cittadino fiorentino per costructione dell' orologio da adattare sopra la torre del palazzo del popolo fiorentino per pulsare le ore di Dio, Trecento ovvero in Trecento fiorini di oro senza nessuna ritenzione di gabelle in quanto è contenuta in essa etc."
126. On clocks as prestige objects, see Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 125–72.
127. Ser Reccho di Domenico Spinelli, "Diario di Ser Reccho di Domenico Spinelli," BNCF, Codice Magliabechiano, XXV, 422, fol. 38v. Cf. Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 131.
128. Fondelli, *Gli "oriuoli meccanici,"* 5. On July 1, 1390, Jacopo di Biagio da Scopeto was commissioned to construct another clock for the Palazzo Vecchio. On July 1, 1397, the communal government commissioned a new bell for the clock from Simone di Lorenzo and his son Piero, "maestri di campane." Note the dates of the legislation. July 1 marked one of the six inauguration days of the signoria's two-month rotating terms, meaning that these two projects were among the first acts of the new government and therefore were considered to be of the utmost importance. The documents that Fondelli refers to are found in ASF, Carte strozziane, IIa serie, 78, 45–47.
129. Gotti, *Palazzo Vecchio*, 33.
130. Trachtenberg poses the examples of the formal similarity between the later towers built in Siena, Volterra, and other towns. Trachtenberg, "What Brunelleschi Saw," 16.
131. On the building history of the Piazza della Signoria, see Spilner, "Ut Civitas Amplietur," 387–467, esp. 393–404; Trachtenberg, *Dominion of the Eye*, 87–147.
132. Trachtenberg, "What Brunelleschi Saw," 16.
133. The original Foraboschi tower rises to the beginning of the palace block's corbelling. On this expansion and a detailed account of the tower's physical elements, see ibid., 17ff.
134. ASF, Statuti, 13 (Statutes of the Capitano del Popolo, 1355, in Tuscan translation), I, clxxxi.
135. Florence, *Statuta populi et communis florentiae: Publica auctoritate, collecta, castigata et praeposita anno salutis*

MCCCCXV (Freiburg: Apud Michaelem Kluch, 1778), V, xlii (vol. 2, 545ff.). This is clear in the separate descriptions of the same ring of the Leone after nones but before vespers, which called the city's officials, announced the hour of weddings, and was also called the *tocchus iuris*. Similarly, the anachronism of some of the information in the 1415 statutes is evident in the unclear number of communal bell ringers hired. Two are noted, but each of the two communal towers seems to require at least two bell ringers to ring any given bell and more to carry out the wider duties assigned to them, such as the twenty-four-hour watch from the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio. Confusion is further increased by the vague reference to what might be assistants and by Goro Dati's statement, in the early fifteenth century, that four bell ringers were on staff in the Palazzo Vecchio alone. See Dati, "Istoria," IX, 15 (281).

136. Romolo Caggese, *Statuto del Podestà del anno 1325*, vol. 2 of *Statuti della Repubblica fiorentina*, ed. Giuliano Pinto, Francesco Salvestrini, and Andrea Zorzi (Florence: Olschki, 1999), I, xxviii, 68–71.

137. Caggese, *Statuto del Capitano del Popolo degli anni 1322–25*, vol. 1 of *Statuti della repubblica fiorentina*, I, xlv, 35.

138. Unless otherwise noted, the following daily schedule of communal sounds was compiled from the three redactions of Florentine statutes found in Caggese, *Podestà (1325)*, III, xl, lxxi, 208–9; ASF, Statuti, 13 (Statues of the Capitano del Popolo, 1355, in Tuscan translation), I, clxxxi, fols. 36v–37r; Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii (vol. 2, 545ff.).

139. Davidsohn states that the little bell of the Badia rang in the morning, followed by three hits of the bell of the Podestà, announcing the daily commencement of labor. Davidsohn, *Storia*, IV, I, 311. However, based on a close reading of the statutes, it appears that the Leone in fact responded to the morning Mass. According to the statutes of 1322, the Capitano was required to respond to the bell of the Podestà in both the evening and the morning, to let the city know that day was at hand. Caggese, *Capitano (1322–25)*, I, xlv (35). By 1355, with the bells of the Palazzo Vecchio firmly ensconced within the daily auditory schedule, this pattern was expanded so that the sequence of rings was Badia-Leone-Podestà-Popolo.

140. I have come across nothing that rivals the complexity, confusion, range of variations, and even similarity of the hours of the day as they were marked by the canonical hours of devotional singing in the Middle Ages. The liturgical cycle originally followed the double twelve-part division of the day and night by the Romans. These prayer times were linked to the four main divisions of day and night. The division of the Christian day was linked to the narrative of the Passion, and each of the divine offices served as a memorial of those events. There are seven (eight): matins (lauds), prime, terce, sext, nones, vespers, and compline. The civic day was usually restricted to the four short offices (prime, terce, sext, nones), which derive from Roman practice, with the addition of compline. Matins seems to have been either just before dawn or as early as midnight and was often sung just before lauds, the singing of the Psalms and canticles. Sext designated midday. Compline was sunset, though it could take place after dark. Vespers was the holiest office, and was known as the evening office. It is important to note that these hours were understood as an aural landscape of songs. Some of the confusion that arises may stem from the fact that these were not points in time, but three hour-long segments, with the prayers coming toward the end. Even the bells that rang for them created a space of time, a duration. Obviously, without the abstraction of modern time precision, schedules were blurred and rounded off by the sounds that bells made over a period of time, allowing space for events to take place rather than points at which they were supposed to occur. One could say that the sound of bells brought time into being. Therefore, the hours of prayer, and the hours of the day along with them, drifted gradually over time, and each city had its own variation in the absence of universal schedules to fix them. In general, throughout Europe, there was a gradual time shift. Nones migrated to the first hour of the afternoon, or right after the end of sext, eventually reaching midday itself. As a result, sext disappeared as an indicator of time, but was exercised just before nones. Vespers moved to an earlier time and became important for indicating pauses in work or the end of a day preceding a feast day. As a prayer it moved to the third hour of the afternoon. This apparently occurred by the thirteenth century. What is also important is that the particular way a holy office or hour was sounded linked it to the right time, so that aurally there was most likely less confusion. It has been speculated that the backward drift of the hours was the result either of the human weakness for food—on feast days the main meal had to wait until after nones—or pressure from laborers, whose workday ended at nones on Saturdays and days before holidays. For Dante, nones was the seventh hour of the day, i.e., the first hour after midday. Matins moved from just after midnight to morning, perhaps from a fear of the night. For these explanations, see Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 29–35. The oldest primary document concerning the hours is the Rule of Saint Benedict. Cf. Isidore of Seville, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*.

141. Davidsohn, *Storia*, I, 1069.

142. This was referred to as the *ora del Toiano*. I would like to thank Margaret Haines of the Opera del Duomo of

Florence for her invaluable help in deciphering the statutes and in bringing my attention to this particular daily moment.

143. There were fines for participating in a *mattinata* between the evening and morning bells, and the offending instruments were confiscated. See ASF, Statuti, 13 (Statutes of the Capitano del Popolo, 1355, in Tuscan translation), III, c. However, numerous popular narratives attest to the continued nighttime practice of courting, and the law seems to have become increasingly anachronistic.
144. No doubt the ringing *a martello* was to highlight the solemnity of an event that was at the heart of the regime's ritual visual performance. Ibid., I, clxxxi; Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii (vol. 2, 546).
145. On the silence of the Florentine regime, see Ulrich Meier, "Die Sicht- und Hörbarkeit der Macht: Der florentiner Palazzo Vecchio im Spätmittelalter," in *Zwischen Gotteshaus und Taverne: Öffentliche Räume in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Susanne Rau and Gerd Schwerhoff (Cologne: Böhlau, 2004).
146. Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii (vol. 2, 546).
147. Until 1260, the Martinella fulfilled this function. See Villani, *Nuova cronica*, VII, 75, 78, vol. 3, 370. From 1303, this was the task of the Montanina. See Davidsohn, *Storia*, III, 1004; Uccelli, *Palazzo del Podestà*, 162.
148. Montanina, "Statuti del Capitano (1355)," I, clxxxi, fol. 37r.
149. Leone, ibid.; Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii (vol. 2, 546).
150. Leone, Davidsohn, *Storia*, IV, I, 312. In times of crisis, both the Leone and the bell of the Podestà could ring together *a martello*; see *Alle bocche della piazza: Diario di anonimo fiorentino (1382–1401)*, ed. Anthony Molho and Franek Sznura (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1986), 34.
151. Residents were compelled to shout warnings for such crimes and ring the bells of the nearest parish church in alarm to alert the authorities. ASF, Statuti, 19 (Statutes of the Podestà, 1355, in Tuscan translation), III, clvi, fol. 181v.
152. Montanina. Artusi and Lasciarrea, *Campane, torri, e campanili*, 30. In February 1382, the *podestà* rang this bell of *chondanagione* at the same time as a *parlamento,* when all citizens of Florence gathered in assembly. The *parlamento*'s decisions carried full authority. See *Alle bocche*, 28. This bell was deliberately not rung for executions carried out later in the same month in 1382; see ibid., 30.
153. Vernio, Villani, *Nuova cronica*, XII, 74, 118, vol. 3, 163, 233; XIII, 36, vol. 3, 382; Stefani, *Cronaca*, 30, 221 (rubric 609).
154. Popolo, Compagni, *Chronicle*, II, 19, p. 47; Villani, *Nuova cronica*, XIII, 36, vol. 3, 382.
155. Leone, "Statuti del Capitano (1355)," I, clxxxi, fol. 37r; Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii (vol. 2, 546).
156. Both the Popolo and the Leone. *Alle bocche*, 54–55.
157. See chapter 5 on the Ciompi revolt.
158. Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii. Gargani locates the provision in a 1369 law. See Gargano T. Gargani, *Dell'antico palazzo della signoria fiorentina durante la repubblica: Discorso storico artistico* (Florence: M. Ricci, 1872), 34.
159. Matteo Villani, *Cronica: Con la continuazione di Filippo Villani* (Parma: Fondazione Pietro Bembo / Ugo Guanda, 1995), XI, 20, vol. 2, 618.
160. Florence, *Statuta*, V, xl (vol. 2, 542.)
161. For example, in the novella known as *Il Grassaiuolo*, the cathedral is depicted as a place of casual conversation. On this story, see chapter 4. In statutes, the Piazza della Signoria had the same status as the area around churches, where certain activities were forbidden. The presence of women inside the Palazzo Vecchio provoked a great deal of anxiety among Florentines. On the latter, see ASF, Statuti, 19 (Statutes of the Podestà, 1355, in Tuscan translation), III, clxxxv.
162. This helps to explain the strength of the insult involved in depriving a community of its bell and the status a stolen bell had as a trophy, while recasting bells was not considered to compromise their identity as such but may have even enhanced it. See Corbin, *Village Bells*, chaps. 2–3.

Chapter 3

1. Florence, *Statuta populi et communis florentiae: Publica auctoritate, collecta, castigata et praeposita anno salutis* MCCCCXV (Freiburg: Apud Michaelem Kluch, 1778), V, xlii (vol. 2, 545). "Ac etiam cum praefata campana leonis pulsetur in mane celebratis missis, quae dicuntur in aurora diei, submissa voce, videlicet VI tocchi." The Italian translation from 1355 describes it this way: "E anche cho la predetta campana del leone si suoni la mattina dette le messe le quali si dicono nel aurora del di' com voce sottomessa sei tocchi." ASF, 13 (Statutes of the Capitano del Popolo, 1355), I, clxxxi. Since matins and lauds ended precisely at dawn and the low Mass before prime was celebrated shortly after, it is impossible to tell which of these masses was the one "celebrated at dawn." However, masses celebrated "submissa voce" appear to have literally been celebrated in hushed voices, behind doors, in a private manner, and often in the context of interdicts. I would like to thank Benjamin Brand for his clarification of the liturgical cycle. Davidsohn believes that this ringing was for prime; see Robert Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 4, pt. I, trans. Eugenio Dupré-Theseider, Superbiblioteca Sansoni (Florence: Sansoni, 1962), 311. Although I believe the Mass was celebrated at the Badia, the cathedral cannot

be ruled out as the source. Most sources, however, point to the Badia as the marker of the city's canonical hours.

2. ASF, Statuti, 13 (Statutes of the Capitano del Popolo, 1355), I, clxxxi; Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii (vol. 2, 546).
3. Romolo Caggese, *Statuto del Capitano del Popolo degli anni 1322–25*, vol. 1 of *Statuti della Repubblica fiorentina*, ed. Giuliano Pinto, Francesco Salvestrini, and Andrea Zorzi (Florence: Olschki, 1999), I, xlv, 35; Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii (vol. 2, 545).
4. Gerhard Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 29. These liturgical hours were marked, therefore, at the first, third, sixth, ninth, and twelfth hours of the day, and developed into the seven canonical hours of matins, prime, terce, sext, nones, vespers, and compline, which were reminders of the Passion of Christ.
5. Dante Alighieri, *Convivio*, ed. Franca Brambilla Ageno (Florence: Le Lettere, 1995), 3.6.2–3, 182–83. Dante explains both systems of the equal and unequal hours defined by the astrologers. The equal hours were fixed and did not vary according to diurnal and nocturnal cycles. Already before the advent of the mechanical clock, both time systems were in use, so there was no real trauma in reaction to the increasing dominance of the abstract equal time of modernity. Unequal hours divided darkness and light into twelve hours, regardless of the season, so that they expanded and contracted in dual system. They were marked by the church as the offices of prime, terce, sext, nones, and vespers, all of which were based on their proximity to sunrise and sunset.
6. Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 31. Over the course of three centuries, nones shifted to the middle of the day and vespers to the third hour of the afternoon.
7. For an interpretation of these sonic exchanges as part of a political and spatial strategy, see Niall Atkinson, "Sonic Armatures: Constructing an Acoustic Regime in Renaissance Florence," *Senses and Society* 7, no. 1 (2012): 39–52. For a historical discussion of calendar of feast days, see Marica Tacconi, *Cathedral and Civic Ritual in Late Medieval and Renaissance Florence: The Service Books of Santa Maria del Fiore* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 54–78.
8. On the antagonistic urbanism of the Florentine republic, see Niall Atkinson, "Architecture, Anxiety, and the Fluid Topographies of Renaissance Florence" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2009), 41–87, 129–38.
9. Davidsohn, *Storia*, IV, II, 127–28. Cf. Anna Maria E. Agnoletti, *Statuto dell'Arte della Lana di Firenze (1317–1319)* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1940), I, xiv (31); IV, xxiii (198).
10. *Arte della Lana*, III, xlii (178–79).
11. Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 208–9.
12. Davidsohn, *Storia*, I,V, pt. 2, 128.
13. "[L]'arte della lana tiene a pigione la campanella de Santo[?] Martino la qual suona per é'usscire e l'ontrare [entrare] trare dei lavoranti e pagano per ciascheduno anno lire diece. Comincia l'anno di 30 de luglio mcclxxxii." ASF, Corporazioni religiose soppresse, 78 (Badia of Florence), 295. I am extremely grateful to Anne Leader for directing me to this source. Cf. Fiorella Facchinetti and Maria Rosaria Trappolini, "Il campanile della Badia fiorentina," in *S. Maria del fiore e le chiese fiorentine del duecento e del trecento nella città delle fabbriche arnolfiane*, ed. Giuseppe Rocchi Coopmans de Yoldi (Florence: Alinea, 2004), 78.
14. Giuseppe Brusa, "L'arte dell'orologeria in Italia—i primi duecento anni," *La voce di Hora*, no. 2 (1996): 10. According to Brusa, the first clock faces only appear in the later fourteenth century, and even then it was easier to count time by the number of rings rather than by looking at the increasingly complicated astrological clock faces.
15. Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 113–14. There was an attempt to bind this new scientific instrument to the importance of sundown as the end of one day and the beginning of the next. Clocks began counting twenty-four hours from nightfall, which, of course, meant that they had to be regularly reset as seasons changed. As Florentine sources began to mark events within the system of twenty-four hours, they were responding to the clock, which then had no fixed relationship with religious time. It is evidence of the archaism of the statutes that they set bell ringing within the parameters of religious time even in the fifteenth century, suggesting that the clock hours may have been less reliable or that the city's daily rhythms were still intimately bound up in a sacred-civic network parallel to the counting of equal hours.
16. Christian Bec, *Les marchands écrivains a Florence, 1375–1434* (Paris: Mouton, 1967), 319.
17. See Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 29–57.
18. Domenico Maria Manni, "Notizie storiche intorno ad Antonio Pucci antico versificatore Fiorentino," in *Delle poesie di Antonio Pucci celebre versificatore fiorentino*, vol. 3, ed. Fra Ildefonso di San Luigi, Delizie degli eruditi toscani (Florence: Gaetano Cambiagi, 1772–75), vii.

> Lasso, che 'l tempo, e l'ora, e le campane
> che ognor col suon mi danno nella mente
> mi fanno rimembrar quanto sovente
> a morte vanno le potenze umane;

e penso lasso, sera, notte, e mane
come si fugge ogni tempo presente.

19. Alain Corbin, *Les cloches de la terre: Paysage sonore et culture sensible dans les campagnes au XIXe siècle* (Paris: A. Michel, 1994), translated by Martin Thom as *Village Bells: Sound and Meaning in the Nineteenth-Century French Countryside*, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), xix.
20. Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii (vol. 2, 525). "Et quod campanella vocata la montanina existens in turri palatii domini potestatis pulsari debeat in mane, & in sero post nonam, quando pulsantur tocchi iure [*sic*] secundum formam supradictae provisionis iam firmatae singulis vicibus, videlicet ante primam, & ultimam pulsationem ipsorum tocchorum."
21. On the places where proclamations were read, see Stephen J. Milner, "'Fanno Bandire, Notificare, et Expressamente Comandare': Town Criers and the Information Economy of Renaissance Florence," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 16, nos. 1/2 (2013): 112–13.
22. Note also that the *podestà*, the chief legal administrator of the commune, always a foreigner who brought his own staff, could not have effectively represented justice as a truly Florentine virtue.
23. Alberto Conte, ed., *Il novellino* (Rome: Salerno, 2001), 85–86.
24. Randolph Starn, "The Republican Regime of the 'Room of Peace' in Siena, 1338–40," *Representations* 18 (Spring 1987): 6–7. Starn has pointed to the anxious obsession with justice in the propaganda of the late medieval Italian commune in a discussion of the frescoes in the Room of Peace in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, where the image of justice is rendered three separate times and referred to in inscriptions (often in contrast to her enemy, tyranny) at least six times.
25. Giovanni Villani, *Nuova cronica*, ed. Giuseppe Porta (Parma: Fondazione Pietro Bembo / Ugo Guanda, 1990), VIII, 114, vol. 1, 577–78.
26. This desire to make certain official decisions public is reflected in the duties of the banditori, who were a crucial part of the mechanism by which news was made public in Florence. See ASF, Statuti, 19 (Statutes of the Podestà, 1355, in Tuscan translation), I, xliii, fols. 29v–31r.
27. Franco Sacchetti, *Il trecentonovelle*, ed. Valerio Marucci, Novellieri Italiani 6 (Rome: Salerno, 1996).
28. The term *ragione* would have had strong resonance for a Florentine merchant audience. It was tightly bound up with skills in accounting—keeping accounts and taking account of the world. However, it was also understood as the concept of justice, connecting reasoned business practices to reasoned judgment. The phrase used in the statutes for judges to sit in communal courts was *rendere ragione* (render judgment, or justice). Therefore, both significations would have been at play in such a narrative, where usurping someone's land was both unjust and the product of poor business practices.
29. Sacchetti, *Il trecentonovelle*, novella 705.
30. Ibid., novella 706.
31. Ibid., novella 700.
32. Ibid., novella 701.
33. Although technically celebrated at sundown, compline often followed soon after vespers, which itself was approaching on sext. See *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Angelus Bell." This forward movement had the tendency to attenuate the time of twilight. On sounding the Ave Maria, see ASF, Statuti, 13 (Statutes of the Capitano del Popolo, 1355, in Tuscan translation), I, clxxxi; Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii, vol. 2, 545.
34. At a synod on November 25, 1326, Jean de Rossillon prescribed that three strikes of the bell be sounded at the hour of compline for forty days of indulgence for reciting the Ave Maria three times. This may have been the origin of the evening bell's triple sequence as well. This practice was reaffirmed by Calixtus III to commemorate the Virgin's salvation of Belgrade from the Turks on May 1, 1472 or 1475. Legend also attributes to Urban II the decree that a prayer be instituted at the ringing of the morning and evening bells, from the launch of the crusade in 1096 to pray for those in the holy expedition. See Francesco Novati, "La 'squilla da lontano' è quella dell'Ave Maria?," in *Indagini e postille dantesche*, ed. Francesco Novati (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1899), 140.
35. Alessandro Lattes, "La campana serale nei secoli XIII e XIV secondo gli statuti delle città italiane," in Novati, *Indagini e postille dantesche*, 164.
36. Exceptions existed, necessarily, for those who could be out at night with a light. In Florence this included the government's staff and security forces, the militia company standard-bearers, those charged with night illumination for guards (*lanternieri*), the night watch, accompanying notaries and other officials, and the *maestri* charged with putting out fires. In the end, people could be out at night with torches of a certain size (at least three pounds of wax) as long as they were in groups of no more than four. ASF, Statuti, 19 (Statutes of the Podestà, 1355, in Tuscan translation), III, lxxxxviii. In some communal statutes, one could search out priests, doctors, and barbers, while bakers and scholars would also have begun their day in darkness. One was able to relieve oneself at the street corner at night, and

if in some towns taverns had to stop selling wine, Siena, for its part, allowed such institutions to remain open so long as the night watch did not enter during hours of vigilance. In Venice, because the Germans needed to have as much wine as they desired (*habere vinum quociens volunt*), otherwise they were liable to tear their hosts to pieces (*aliter frangerent hostum*), wine was often exempt from commercial restrictions if it was for immediate consumption. Lattes, "La campana serale," 168–69.

37. Novati, "La 'squilla da lontano,'" 140.
38. Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii (vol. 2, 545).
39. Lattes, "La campana serale," 163.
40. *Purgatorio* 8.1–6. For a literary narrative driven by the missed curfew, see Boccaccio, *Decameron*, 2, 2. The merchant Rinaldo d'Asti, having been robbed on the road, arrives after dark and therefore too late to enter a nearby town.
41. Lattes, "La campana serale," 166.
42. Ibid., 168.
43. For an urbanistic and political reading of these benches, see Yvonne Elet, "Seats of Power: The Outdoor Benches of Early Modern Florence," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61, no. 4 (2002): 444–69.
44. Ibid., 448–50.
45. On talking, listening, telling stories, and performing practical jokes, see D. V. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 41–54; Giuseppe Guido Ferrero and Maria Luisa Doglio, *Novelle del quattrocento* (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1975), 629ff.; Sacchetti, *Il trecentonovelle*, novella 76. On evening veneration of the Virgin, see Jill Burke, *Changing Patrons: Social Identity and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Florence* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), 48–49. On even wool workers having time in the evenings to listen to sermons, see Sacchetti, *Il trecentonovelle*, novella 100.
46. According to the 1355 statutes, the double-fine bell (*campana per doppia pena*) was that of the Podestà, which sounded after vespers, though it is not specified how long after. This meant that the double fine was instituted within the configuration of the evening bell. ASF, Statuti, 19 (Statutes of the Podestà, 1355, in Tuscan translation), III, lxi, fol. 140r.
47. Ibid., III, lxxxxvii, fol. 162v.
48. Novati, "La 'squilla da lontano,'" 140–41 and n. 14. Although official papal recognition of the ten-day indulgence only dated to 1327, during the pontificate of John XXII, there is evidence from inscriptions on surviving bells themselves that the practice of ringing the triple Ave Maria prayer in the evening was already widespread by that time. Novati refers to a bull of 1318 that established the Ave Maria at dusk for the single town of Saintes, in France, and declares on that evidence that the practice was not widespread, since the document does not mention any other town as an example. He also quotes the text of the 1327 bull, which was supposed to stimulate still more the zeal of the faithful, just as it did that of Dante's pilgrim. This suggests that the bull was only codifying what was already the popular attachment of the divine to the sounds at the end of the day. On the inscriptions, see *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Angelus Bell." The morning or "little Office of Mary" was established by 1330, but the midday Ave Maria only appeared in Florence by 1518. See Gargano T. Gargani, *Dell'antico palazzo della signoria fiorentina durante la repubblica: Discorso storico artistico* (Florence: M. Ricci, 1872), 34. The 1325 Florentine statutes make no reference to the Ave Maria. Popular legend also attributed the church's ringing of this hour to Pope Urban II (1088–99) on his proclamation of the First Crusade, after which the practice was abandoned, only to be revived by Gregory IX (1227–41), or instituted for the first time by Saint Bonaventure. By the fifteenth century, we know from Saint Antoninus's *Summa*, the Ave Maria was announced both in the morning and evening in Florence, by three rings of the bells of the churches.
49. As an example, see the duration of rings for the bells in Venice offered in Dohrn–van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 208–9.
50. *Purgatorio* 8.1–6.
51. One of Dante's early commentators was more prosaic in his explanation, believing that the sound was simply the evening bell signaling the closing of the city gates, so that the quickened pace was not from a stimulated heart but from an anxious mind trying to reach the town before nightfall: "quando fit sero, si peregrini audiunt pulsare unam campanam, que vocatur in Ytalia squilla, quae significat finem diei, pungunt se, idest conantur velocius ire, propter applicare ad portam antequam claudatur." Johannis de Serravalle, *Translatio et comentum totius libri Dantis Aldigherii*, ed. Marcellino da Civezza and Teofilo Domenichelli (Prato: Giachetti, 1891). Cf. Novati, "La 'squilla da lontano,'" 143.
52. See the poem quoted by Novati in ibid., 140.
53. This is suggested by the strict legislation governing the ringing of the bells, which mandated fines to the *podestà* and the communal bell ringers in the Palazzo Vecchio for failing to maintain these particular rhythms. Caggese, *Capitano (1322–25)*, I, xlv (35).
54. Florence, *Statuta*, V, xlii (vol. 2, 545). "Et quod ipsae campanae pulsetur modo, & ordine, ac temporibus

infrascriptis, ut cum campana leonis pulsetur de sero ave maria, & etiam tertium sonum, pulsato primo tertio sono cum campana domini potestatis."

55. The bell announcing the day is clear on this point: "Et cum campana domini potestatis primo & immediate cum campana populi pulsetur campana diei." Ibid. This phrase also emphasizes how even the *campana del dì* was not a specific bell but a specific configuration. The statutes do not refer to a corresponding *campana serale*.
56. ASF, Statuti, 13 (Statutes of the Capitano del Popolo, 1355, in Tuscan translation), I, clxxxi, fol. 37r. "[C]ho la campana del leone si suoni da sera a venie (ave maria) et anche il terzo suono sonato imprima il terzo suono cho la campana di messere la podestà."
57. Romolo Caggese, *Statuto del Podestà del anno 1325*, vol. 2 of *Statuti della Repubblica fiorentina*, III, xl, 184; ASF, Statuti, 19 (Statutes of the Podestà, 1355, in Tuscan translation), III, lxi, fol. 140r.
58. ASF, Statuti, 19 (Statutes of the Podestà, 1355, in Tuscan translation), III, lxxxxviii, fols. 162v–163r. In typical fashion, the law begins by banning everyone from being out in the city at night, but then lists exceptions for certain groups and the kinds of lighting persons were supposed to have if they were on the street at night.
59. Dumping various noxious or dirty materials at night was forbidden, but cesspools could only be emptied at night. Ibid., IV, cx, fols. 246v–247v.
60. Caggese, *Podestà (1325)*, III, cxxi, 249–50.
61. ASF, Statuti, 19 (Statutes of the Podestà, 1355, in Tuscan translation), III, fols. 163v–164r.
62. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "The 'Mattinata' in Medieval Italy," in *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 268.
63. Ibid., 269–70.
64. Ibid., 270.
65. Ibid., 272.
66. Ibid., 273.
67. A. Roger Ekirch, *At Day's Close: Night in Times Past* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005), 110.
68. *Alle bocche della piazza: Diario di anonimo fiorentino (1382–1401)*, ed. Anthony Molho and Franek Sznura (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1986), 66.
69. Ibid., 42.
70. Georg Simmel, "The Sociology of Space," in *Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings*, ed. David Frisby (London: Sage, 1997), 146.
71. Blavignac, *La cloche*, 167.
72. See chapter 1. Outside the discipline of art history, other theorists have been occupied with the question of the embodied and psychological aspects of urban space. See Jonathan Raban, *Soft City* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1974); Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); David Harvey, *The Urban Experience* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989); Steve Pile, *The Body and the City: Psychoanalysis, Space, and Subjectivity* (London: Routledge, 1996); Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift, *Cities: Reimagining the Urban* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002); Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).
73. See *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*, ed. Salvatore Battaglia and Giorgio Bàrberi Squarotti (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1961), 2:599.
74. This is suggested by the fact that the division of the city into *sestieri*, as outlined by the 1325 statutes, was based on clusters of parishes, whose borders were common knowledge since they were not defined. Precise borders of parishes may prove impossible to fix, although a general pattern may produce useful information about the political redistricting of parish neighborhoods.
75. Albericus de Rosate, *Commentarii in primam digesti veteris partem* (Venice, 1585), 146v.
76. Ibid.
77. See the examples in Lattes, "La campana serale," 168–70.
78. Richard C. Trexler, *Synodal Law in Florence and Fiesole, 1306–1518* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1971), 121. The mendicants formed the focus of each district, rather than a parish church, so that their spatial jurisdictions were both religious and political simultaneously.
79. ASF, Corporazioni religiose soppresse, 79 (Badia of Florence), 169 (n.p., entry 77). As Saundra Weddle has shown, Sant'Ambrogio's ability to restrict its neighbors' ambitions comes from a privilege it received from the bishop.
80. Ibid., entry 146, July 16, 1477. "Dio ci aiuti Moriti canonico fiorentino, e Bernardo Buongirolami danno un lodo tra il monastero di S. Ambrogio, e tra Fra Giuliano di Bartolomeo del terzo ordine di S. Francesco nel quale dichiarano, che e' stato lecito a detto Fra Giuliano di erigere, e continuare a erigere un oratorio dentro la parrocchia di S. Ambrogio, in onore del arcangiolo Rafaello vicino, e fuori delle mura di Firenze tra la porta alla croce, e la porta alla Giustizia, con un campaniletto, e una campana di fiorini 80=circa, purchè non vi si dica messa, nè si facciano ufizi, nè vi si sottervi[?], nè vi si amministrino sacramenti senza licenza della badessa: e con obbligo di dare a titolo di censo[?] per la mattina di S. Ambrogio due falcole di cera bianca di fiorini 1=, e mancando a ciò le monache possano farlo distruggere."
81. Giuseppe Richa and Giuseppe Zocchi, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine, divise ne' suoi quartieri*, vol. 10

(Florence: P. G. Viviani, 1754), 20; Ugo Procacci, "L'incendio della chiesa del Carmine del 1771 (La sagra del Masaccio.—Gli affreschi della cappella di San Giovanni)," *Rivista d'arte* 14 (1932): 181.

82. See Atkinson, "Fluid Topographies," 49–71.
83. Charles Burroughs, *The Italian Renaissance Palace Façade: Structures of Authority, Surfaces of Sense* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 56.
84. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, IX, 89.
85. ASF, Corporazione religiose soppresse, 79 (Badia of Florence), 169 (n.p., entry 32). "Il pontefice Urbano V concede alle monache di S. Ambrogio, possit[?] fuori delle mura di Firenze di poter celebrare li ufizi divini in tempo di interdetto a porte chiuse, senza suono di campane, e a voce bassa." I would like to thank Saundra Weddle for bringing these disputes to my attention.
86. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, VII, 75, vol. 1, 369–71.
87. Ibid., vol. 1, 370. The Martinella's mobility was obviously a function of its relatively small size. However, it had to be large enough to represent Florentine military might to the city and to coordinate troop movements in the field. Therefore, such ceremonial movement would have been a significant symbolic and practical undertaking.
88. Ibid., vol. 1, 370–71.
89. Ibid.
90. Without citing any references, Artusi and Lasciarrea claim that the bell and the *carroccio* were taken by the Sienese and, in contrast to conventional practice, not paraded into the city as symbols of victory, but were never seen by Florentines again. See Luciano Artusi and Roberto Lasciarrea, *Campane, torri, e campanili di Firenze* (Florence: Le Lettere, 2008), 40.
91. Villani, *Nuova cronica*, VII, 78, vol. 1, 379–80.
92. Davidsohn, *Storia*, IV, I, 313.
93. Villani is not clear whether the bell was simply in the care of the church and was only brought out to ring in times of war, or whether it was used in times of peace by the church itself.
94. This particular place was the site around which the legend of the Buondelmonte murder took place. On this episode, see chapter 2.
95. Today this spot is marked on the pavement in the center of the market.
96. Corbin, *Village Bells*, 79.
97. Gregorio Dati, "Istoria di Firenze," in *Firenze Contro Milano: Gli Intellettuali Fiorentini nelle Guerre con i Visconti (1390–1440)*, ed. Antonio Lanza (Anzio [Rome]: De Rubeis, 1991), 263–65.
98. Trachtenberg, *Dominion of the Eye*, 17–25, 114–24, 131–37.
99. Dati, "Istoria," 263.
100. Ibid.
101. Aurelio Gotti, *Storia del Palazzo Vecchio in Firenze* (Florence: Stabilimento G. Civelli, Editore, 1889), 31. It was said that after its recasting in 1373 the Leone could be heard from more than thirteen miles around. If true, it would have ensured that no one within the city, and many without, could claim not to hear the evening bell. Gotti's source for this is Scipione's sixteenth-century history of the city, which quotes Duke Cosimo I's claim that the bell weighed twenty-seven thousand pounds, which was an even bigger exaggeration.
102. Dati, "Istoria," 263.
103. That the sound of bells was intimately connected to a central authority is confirmed by the research of Corbin into nineteenth-century France, where he finds that disputes over bells reflected "a form of attachment—which has also disappeared—to symbolic objects. They laid bare an interplay of passions now incomprehensible to us. To control the voice of authority radiating from the center of a territory was a much coveted form of domination, although nowadays it seems a paltry thing. Numerous disputes in the locality hinged upon this privilege, which had so many ramifications." Corbin, *Village Bells*, xix.
104. Ibid., 157.
105. Mario Fondelli, *Gli "oriuoli mechanici" di Filippo di ser Brunellesco Lippi: Documenti e notizie inedite sull'arte dell'orologeria a Firenze* (Florence: Le Lettere, 2000), 5. On July 1, 1390, Jacopo di Biagio da Scopeto was commissioned to construct another clock for the Palazzo Vecchio. On July 1, 1397, the communal government commissioned a new bell for the clock from Simone di Lorenzo and his son Piero, "maestri di campane."
106. Goro's narrative, which spans the years from 1380 to 1406, places the casting of the bell in the middle of the war.

Chapter 4

1. Edward Muir, "The Virgin on the Street Corner: The Place of the Sacred in Italian Cities," in *Religion and Culture in the Renaissance and Reformation*, ed. Steven E. Ozment (Kirksville, Mo.: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1989), 161.
2. John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200–1575* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006), 188.
3. The following account is recorded in *Alle bocche della piazza: Diario di anonimo fiorentino (1382–1401)*, ed. Anthony Molho and Franek Sznura (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1986), 54ff.
4. The job of disseminating official messages to every corner of the city was considered so critical that the government

hired permanent spies to make sure that *banditori* (town criers) were faithfully carrying out their duties. See "Statuti del Podestà (1355)," I, xliii, fols. 29v–31r.

5. *Alle bocche*, 54.
6. Ibid., 55.
7. Ibid., 66.
8. Francesco Guicciardini, "Ricordi politici e civili," in *Opere inedite*, vol. 1 (Florence: Barbèra, Bianchi e Comp., 1857), 124. English translation in Guicciardini, *Maxims and Reflections of a Renaissance Statesman (Ricordi)*, trans. Mario Domandi (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 76–77.
9. Ulrich Meier, "Die Sicht- und Hörbarkeit der Macht: Der Florentiner Palazzo Vecchio im Spätmittelalter," in *Zwischen Gotteshaus und Taverne: Öffentliche Räume in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Susanne Rau and Gerd Schwerhoff (Cologne: Böhlau, 2004), 255ff.
10. According to the statutes, secrets were legally bound to the palace interior. See "Statuti del Capitano (1355)," III, xiii, fol. 145v.
11. Meier, "Die Sicht- und Hörbarkeit," 255n56. Unfortunately, Meier is missing the precise documentation for these formal relations.
12. Ibid., 254.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., 245. In addition to the conditions under which the person's name could enter the pouch in the first place, confirmation to office was based on several factors. The candidate had to be alive and present, his taxes had to be paid, he could not have been denounced as a magnate or Ghibelline, and no close relatives (*parenti*) could be serving in high office at the same time.
15. Franco Sacchetti, *Il trecentonovelle*, ed. Valerio Marucci, Novellieri Italiani 6 (Rome: Salerno, 1996), 132.
16. Ibid.
17. Lauro Martines, *Strong Words: Writing and Social Strain in the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 234.
18. D. V. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 45.
19. Lauro Martines, *An Italian Renaissance Sextet: Six Tales in Historical Context* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 119. News reporting became a regular feature of these performances in the later 1400s, with traumatic events such as the massacre at Otranto in 1480 being sung in *piazze* everywhere in Italy; see Ottavia Niccoli, *Profeti e popolo nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Rome: Laterza, 1987), 31.
20. Ottavia Niccoli, "Profezie in piazza: Note sul profetismo popolare nell'italia del primo Cinquecento," *Quaderni storici* 41 (1979): 515. According to Niccoli, this phenomenon, a part of the activities in the market square, disappeared after 1530.
21. Ottavia Niccoli, "The End of Prophecy," *Journal of Modern History* 61, no. 4 (1989): 669–70; Niccoli, "Profezie in piazza," 504.
22. On the popular nature of storytelling in Florence, see Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 43–46.
23. Pucci complained that verse recitals were given everywhere in Florence, even in disreputable places. See Giuseppe Corsi, ed., *Rimatori del Trecento* (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1969); Martines, *Strong Words*, 236.
24. On the repertoire of cantatori in Florence, see Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 44ff.; Bianca Becherini, "Un canta in panca fiorentino: Antonio Di Guido," *Rivista musicale italiana* 50 (1948): 241–47; Francesco Novati, "Le poesie sulla natura delle frutta e i cantarini del comune," in *Attraverso il medio evo: Studi e ricerche* (Bari: Gius. Laterza & figli, 1905); Leonardo Olschki, "I 'cantari dell'India' di Giuliano Dati," *La Bibliofilia* 40, nos. 8–9 (1938): 289–316; Renée Watkins, "Il Burchiello (1404–1448)—Poverty, Politics, and Poetry," *Italia Quarterly* 14, no. 54 (1970): 21–87.
25. Quoted in Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 44. Dante was read not only at the Florentine studio but also in the cathedral and Orsanmichele, which reached a larger audience in a more informal setting.
26. For an account of the earliest known documents concerning the church and the layout of the area, see Leonia Desideri Costa, *La chiesa di S. Martino del vescovo, l'oratorio dei buonomini e gli affreschi sulle opere di misericordia in Firenze presso le case degli Alighieri* (Florence: Tipografia Classica, 1942), 7–32.
27. For Rastrelli's description, see ibid., 22. Desideri Costa provides evidence for the Badia wanting to build in the area in front of the entrance, leaving a street three and one half *braccia* wide to allow access to the church. The decision required the destruction of illegally built construction in the square, leaving a five-*braccia* radius around the well that had been sold by the Badia, and not building where the entrance of the church was, from the west (*tramontana*) up to the paved public street—presumably via Dante Alighieri—of a width of three and one quarter *braccia*. However, this would not have left room for a piazza. Therefore, the area in front of the church, which included a well, had to have been left clear, although the entrance may have been partially obscured.
28. On these properties, see ibid., 24–32. On the wool industry, see A. Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi: Les hommes, les lieux, le travail* (Paris: Écôle des Hautes Études en Sciences

Sociales, 1993); Hidetoshi Hoshino, *L'arte della Lana in Firenze nel basso medioevo: Il commercio della lana e il mercato dei panni fiorentini nei secoli XIII–XV*, Biblioteca Storica Toscana 21 (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1980); Hoshino, *Industria tessile e commercio internazionale nella firenze del tardo medioevo*, ed. Franco Franceschi and Sergio Tognetti, Biblioteca Storica Toscana 39 (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 2001); Franco Franceschi, *Oltre il "Tumulto": I lavoratori fiorentini dell'arte della lana fra Tre e Quattrocento* (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1993).

29. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 44.
30. Enrico Malato, ed., *Il Quattrocento*, Storia della letteratura italiana 2 (Rome: Salerno, 1995), 3, 860.
31. Although some, like Niccolò Cieco, were full-time singers, the majority of the storytellers in Florence came from the middling class of artisan guildsmen, being shoemakers, bakers, and barbers. See Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 44.
32. Ibid. Cf. Rodolfo Renier, ed., *Strambotti e sonettii dell'Altissimo* (Turin: Società Bibliofila, 1886), xii–xiii (no. 2).
33. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 45–47. Cieco's poem is found in Antonio Lanza, *Lirici toscani del Quattrocento* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1973), 202–7. Cosimo de' Medici certainly understood the powerful social consensus that could be built by the sonorous sounds of San Martino. Addressing the social harmony he brought to the city and praising him as a patron of buildings in public performances—"conserver of temples and holy places"—meant that his name would echo throughout the streets of Florence like a powerful afterimage.
34. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 48. Cf. Arturo Graf, "Il zibaldone attribuito ad Antonio Pucci," *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* 1 (1883): 282–300.
35. For a discussion of the content and authors of the *zibaldoni*, see Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 69–81.
36. Ibid., 74.
37. See the letter by Francesco Buondelmonti quoted in ibid. Doffo di Nepo Spini records two instances in which he lent his copy of the *Decameron*: "E a dì 25 di novembre 1427 gli prestai il libro dell Cento Novelle . . . riebbilo. Prestai a Giovanni di Scolaio degli Spini, Il 16 ottobre 1428, la mia cronicha di Giovanni Villani in due volume." Elio Conti et al., *La civiltà fiorentina del Quattrocento* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1993), 236, citing ASF, Carte strozziane, IIA serie, 13, fol. 59v.
38. Vittore Branca, *Un secondo elenco di manoscritti e studi sul testo del "Decameron" con due appendici* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1958), 163. "[E] che non desse n' a messer né a nullo se non a me . . . e guardate non venga a mano a messer Neri perché non l'avrei . . . e guardate di non prestarlo a nullo perché molti saranno malcortesi." Lending out books was considered a risk and, according to one source, was a matter of one's word. Kent quotes a source who laments lending a book to a friend, who kept it for such a long time that he then swore he had returned it. The author goes on to make reference to financial lending, where such a swindle would not only lose him the thing loaned, but also the friendship that was supposed to guarantee it. See Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 74.
39. On the various genres of texts found in *zibaldoni* and other vernacular miscellanies, see Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 69–83.
40. Suzanne Branciforte, "Antonio Di Meglio, Dante, and Cosimo de' Medici," *Italian Studies* 50 (1995): 11. For a discussion of the office of the herald, see Richard C. Trexler, *The Libro Cerimoniale of the Florentine Republic* (Geneva: Droz, 1978); Suzanne Branciforte, "Ars Poetica Rei Publicae: The Herald of the Florentine Signoria" (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1990).
41. On Antonio's biography, see Branciforte, "Ars Poetica," 89–104.
42. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, chaps. 5 and 6. As Kent makes clear, Cosimo de' Medici's patronage of events around San Martino is evidence of both his personal and social interest as well as his awareness that praise and damnation from the *panche* had real effects.
43. Francesco Flamini, *La lirica toscana del Rinascimento anteriore ai tempi del Magnifico* (1891; repr., Florence: Le Lettere, 1977), 59.
44. Watkins, "Il Burchiello," 29.
45. Domenico Guerri, *La corrente popolare nel rinascimento: Berte, burle, baie nella firenze del brunellesco e del burchiello* (Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1931), 94. Historian Renée Watkins agrees with Guerri that the lute referred to in Burchiello's poem is, in fact, a lute, but does not believe that the sleeping clouds, warring on his lute until they break his strings, are humanist poets, who would have been present in the gardens and homes where Il Burchiello performed. See Watkins, "Il Burchiello," 33.
46. Watkins, "Il Burchiello," 26.
47. Leon Battista Alberti, *Momus*, ed. Virginia Brown, trans. Sarah Knight (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003), 132/33.
48. Ibid.
49. Boccaccio, *Decameron*, ed. Vittore Branca (Turin: Einaudi), 6.1, 9.
50. Ibid., 6.1, 10–11.
51. Ibid., 6.5, 13. As a master storyteller, Giotto stands in direct contrast to the hapless knight in the previous story, who shows how good content is wasted if not wedded to competent style.

52. Poggio Bracciolini, *Facezie*, trans. Marcello Ciccuto (Milan: Biblioteca universale Rizzoli, 1983), LXXXIII.
53. This attempt to prolong narrative by various means could also be a laudable act. Branca points to how Boccaccio's copyists added stories, such as "Il grasso legnaiuolo," or a letter at the end, "to prolong the noble rhythms of the tenth day." See Branca, *Un secondo elenco*, 198.
54. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 44; Malato, *Il Quattrocento*, 3, 856.
55. See Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 44–48.
56. Ibid., 92. On the ancient concept of memory palaces, see Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966). For an example of the Renaissance use of such techniques, see D. V. Kent, "Michele Del Giogante's House of Memory," in *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence*, ed. William J. Connell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 110–36. On memory techniques of the Middle Ages, see Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski, *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, Material Texts (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002). On the social nature of memory, see the classic studies in Maurice Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (1952; repr., Paris: Mouton, 1975); Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective*, Bibliothèque de l'évolution de l'humanité 28, rev. ed. (Paris: A. Michel, 1997). On the profound connection between collective memory and spatial topographies, see Halbwachs, *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte: Étude de mémoire collective*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1971).
57. "[P]er lo quale estimava niuno uomo di bassa condizione, quantunque richissimo fosse, esser di gentil donna degno, e veggendo lui [il suo marito] ancora con tutte le sue richezze da niuna altra cosa essere più avanti che da saper divisare un mescolato." *Decameron* 3.3, 6 (my translation).
58. "[I]l valente uomo, più accorto che il santo frate, senza troppo indugio la sagacità della donna comprese." Ibid., 3.3, 18.
59. "Hommi posto in cuore di fargliele alcuna volta dire a' miei fratelli, ma poscia m'ho pensato che gli uomini fanno alcuna volta l'ambasciate per modo che le risposte seguitan cattive, di che nascon parole, e dalle parole si perviene a' fatti: per che, accio' che male e scandalo non ne nascesse, me ne son taciuta." Ibid., 3.3, 12.
60. Domenichi is also found in a list of "viri illustres" in Boccaccio's own *zibaldone*; see BNCF, *Zibaldone magliabechiano*, B.R. 50, fol. 232.
61. Giovanni Cavalcanti, *Istorie Fiorentine*, ed. Filippo Luigi Polidori (Florence: Tipografia all'insegna di Dante, 1838), X, 13 (311).
62. It is also a rewriting of a story by Diogenes Laertius; see chapter 1. There was a popular Latin compendium of the *Lives*, most likely by an Italian author and written before 1326, that was often confused with the actual work by Laertius and was printed as such in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There was also a fourteenth-century Italian translation of this Latin text, making it possible not only that Sacchetti could have read the Latin version, but also that vernacular audiences could have been familiar with the same narrative. On the translations of Diogenes Laertius, see James Hankins and Ada Palmer, *The Recovery of Ancient Philosophy in the Renaissance: A Brief Guide*, Quaderni di Rinascimento / Istituto nazionale di studi sul Rinascimento 44 (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 2008), 62.
63. Sacchetti, *Il trecentonovelle*, 115.
64. Ibid. "[C]avandoli la lingua, e facendoli con la mano la fica."
65. Ibid.
66. William Robins, "Vernacular Textualities in Fourteenth-Century Florence," in *The Vulgar Tongue: Medieval and Postmedieval Vernacularity*, ed. Fiona Somerset and Nicholas Watson (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 115.
67. Ibid., 116.
68. Ibid., 114–15.
69. Ibid., 112. Williams bases this autonomy, which was particular to cities like Florence, on the independent authority of the merchants' tribunal, or Mercanzia, which was "not a legal court so much as a place for the auditing and copying of account books of merchants who stood as creditors and debtors to each other." It ensured the solvency of larger firms at the expense of lesser guildsmen by enforcing claims of the former on the latter, and by banning the use of Latin in 1355 it institutionalized a certain type of textuality.
70. Ibid., 113, citing Anne Middleton, "Medieval Studies," in *Redrawing the Boundaries: The Transformation of English and American Literary Studies*, ed. Stephen Jay Greenblatt and Giles B. Gunn (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1992), 26–27.
71. Robins, "Vernacular Textualities," 115.
72. Martines, *Strong Words*, 232–33; Denis Fachard, *Consulte e pratiche della repubblica fiorentina, 1498–1505*, vol. 2 (Geneva: Droz, 1993), 426–27.
73. Martines, *Strong Words*, 233–34.
74. Ibid., 235.
75. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 55.
76. "Statuti del Capitano (1355)," I, CLXIII, fol. 32r.
77. Robert Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 4, pt. 1, trans. Eugenio Dupré-Theseider, Superbiblioteca Sansoni (Florence: Sansoni, 1962), VII, 707. They were paid a fixed

amount by the family, could only announce one name at a time, and could not make such announcements either at night or during outbreaks of plagues, to minimize anxiety.

78. "Statuti del Podestà (1355)," III, fols. 163v–164r.
79. Ibid., III, lxxxi, fol. 149v.
80. For a selection of these laws, see "Statuti del Podestà (1355)," III, xxvii, xxviii, xxviiii, xxx, xxxi, fols. 130r–130v
81. Carol Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 205; Davidsohn, *Storia*, II, 513; "Statuti del Podestà (1355)," III, lxii, fol. 140r.
82. Paolo da Certaldo, "Libro di buoni costumi," in *Mercanti scrittori: Ricordi nella Firenze tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, ed. Vittore Branca (Milan: Rusconi, 1986), 74. "[V]a a parlare i tuoi sacreti fatti in una piazza, o in uno prato o renaio o campo scoperto, sì che tu vegga che persona non vi sia presso che v'oda." In Florence, the *renaio* was located along the Arno in the vicinity of the Ponte Rubiconte (alle Grazie). See *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*, ed. Salvatore Battaglia and Giorgio Bàrberi Squarotti (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1961), 15:797.
83. Dino Compagni, *Dino Compagni's Chronicle of Florence*, ed. Daniel E. Bornstein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), I, 1, p. 5.
84. Ibid.
85. Thomas Kuehn, "*Fama* as a Legal Status in Renaissance Florence," in *Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe*, ed. Thelma S. Fenster and Daniel Lord Smail (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 29. It is important to note that for legal procedures, what one heard—*per auditum*—was placed below the truth value inherent in what one saw—*per visum*. See Chris Wickham, *Courts and Conflict in Twelfth-Century Tuscany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 76. Cf. Giorgio Zordan, *Il diritto e la procedura criminale nel tractatus de maleficiis di Angelo Gambiglioni* (Padua: CEDAM, 1976).
86. Kuehn, "*Fama* as a Legal Status," 29.
87. *Alle bocche*, xxxv–xxxvi.
88. Ibid., xxxvi.
89. Ibid., 17. On the meaning of the terms *favellìo* and *favela*, see *Grande dizionario*, 5:743–44.
90. *Alle bocche*, 17.
91. Ibid., 18.
92. Ibid. In this case the slogans were "Viva Parte Ghuelfa" and "Muoiano e' Ghibelini," which demonstrates the shorthand way Florentines had of designating the good and the bad, the legitimate and the treasonous elements of the city. However, they were as easily used by either side of the factional divide; see ibid., 33.
93. Ibid., 20.
94. Ibid., 33.
95. Ibid., 33, 34.
96. Ibid., 34.
97. Ibid., 33.
98. The prosperity of the trading system centered in the Rialto depended on timing. See Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of a Myth* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 154.
99. Ibid., 150–62.
100. *Alle bocche*, xxxvi.
101. Deborah Howard, *The Architectural History of Venice* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1980), 48.
102. Ibid., 51.
103. *Decameron* 4.2, 8.
104. Ibid.
105. David Wallace, *Giovanni Boccaccio, Decameron* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 59.
106. *Decameron* 4.2, 32–33.
107. Ibid., 4.2, 44.
108. On the ways in which information was exchanged, guarded, and spied upon in the Venetian public space, see Filippo de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
109. The distance between the ideal and the actual functioning of the market was always fluctuating. "Regulation and renovation proved unable to keep up with growth, and there was so much confusion amid the many installations and so many impediments to circulation that a new inspection commission was named in 1341. It had the dual charge of combating general disorder in the market and facilitating transactions, but it was also expected to reconcile aesthetic imperatives with economic modernization. Although it sought an ideal city and a central market area organized for the common utility and propitious to business and profits, public policy also strove for harmony and beauty." Crouzet-Pavan, *Venice Triumphant*, 152.
110. Giorgio Padoan, "Sulla novella veneziana del *Decameron* (iv 2)," in *Boccaccio, Venezia e il Veneto*, ed. Vittore Branca and Giorgio Padoan (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1979), 25–26. The current Loggia della Pescaria on the Grand Canal was built in a neo-Gothic style. However, behind it, on the Campo delle Beccarie, are the remains of the Querini palace, which is now the site of the daily sale of fish.
111. Ibid., 27–28. The author also finds the will of an Elisa in the Archivio di Stato of Venice (ASV)—Atti Andrea da S. Cassiano 1024.22. This was apparently an uncommon name, but Lisetta was the diminutive. The document is dated 1313. She left much to city convents, including the Frari, under reconstruction in 1347 (the convent of Frate

Alberto), where this Elisa wanted to be buried. She was the wife of Niccolò, who was of the branch of the family living in the *palazzo mazor* until 1310.

112. Boccaccio, *Decameron* 4.2.
113. Ibid., 4.2, 52.
114. Padoan, "Sulla novella veneziana," 29.
115. Boccaccio, *Decameron* 4.2, 56.
116. Richard C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), 210.
117. Francesco Zambrini, *Storia di fra Michele minorita: Come fu arso in Firenze nel 1389; Con documenti risguardanti i Fraticelli della povera vita; Testi inediti del buon secolo di nostra lingua*, Scelta di Curiosità letterarie inedite o rare dal secolo XII al XIX dispensa 50 (Bologna: G. Romagnoli, 1864), 43.
118. Ibid., 44.
119. Ibid.
120. Ibid., 45.
121. Ibid.
122. Ibid., 46–47.
123. Ibid., 49.
124. Ibid., 52.
125. The Buondelmonte murder, discussed in chapter 1, connected the knight's death to Christ's by the ritual riding into the city, the white tunic he wore, and the event's coincidence with Easter. During the feast of the Epiphany, the Florentine baptistery was decorated as if it were the temple of Herod, with the procession leading to the convent of San Marco as Bethlehem. See Rab Hatfield, "The Compagnia De' Magi," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 107–61. Later, Alberti's "copy" of the Holy Sepulchre for the Rucellai family evoked the sanctity of the Holy Land. In the late quattrocento, Savonarola made a connection between Florence and the coming New Jerusalem. See Donald Weinstein, *Savonarola: The Rise and Fall of a Renaissance Prophet* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 122, 32–47.

Chapter 5

1. Richard C. Trexler, "Follow the Flag: The Ciompi Revolt Seen from the Streets," in *The Workers of Renaissance Florence*, Power and Dependence in Renaissance Florence 3 (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1993), 30–60. Originally published in *Bibliotheque d'humanisme et renaissance* 46 (1984): 357–92.
2. Several firsthand accounts of the Ciompi revolt are collected in Gino Scaramella, ed., *Il tumulto dei Ciompi: Cronache e memorie*, Rerum italicarum scriptores, new ed., 18, pt. 3 (Città di Castello: Nicola Zanichelli, 1917–34). Cf. the diary of Pagolo di Ser Guido Cimatore in ASF, Carte strozziane, IIa serie, 70, which is transcribed in A. Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi: Les hommes, les lieux, le travail* (Paris: Écôle des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1993). The classic studies on the Ciompi and the revolt of 1378 are Niccolò Rodolico, *I Ciompi* (Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1945); Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto: Note di storia fiorentina, 1343–1378* (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1968); *Il tumulto dei Ciompi: Un momento di storia fiorentina ed europea* (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1981); Trexler, *Workers of Renaissance Florence*. Recently there has been renewed interest in the subject. See Franco Franceschi, *Oltre il "Tumulto": I lavoratori fiorentini dell'arte della lana fra Tre e Quattrocento* (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1993); Ernesto Screpanti, "La politica dei Ciompi: Petizioni, riforme e progetti dei rivoluzionari fiorentini del 1378," *Archivio storico italiano* 156, no. 1 (2007): 3–56; Screpanti, *L'angelo della liberazione nel tumulto dei Ciompi: Firenze, Giugno–Agosto, 1378* (Siena: Protagon, 2008).
3. Robert Fredona has identified three major currents in scholarship on the revolt's ideological underpinnings. See Robert Fredona, "Political Conspiracy in Florence, 1340–1382" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2010), 86.
4. Trexler, "Follow the Flag," 30.
5. Niccolò Rodolico, *La democrazia fiorentina nel suo Tramonto (1378–1382)* (1905; repr., Rome: Multigrafica, 1970), 441–45; Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi*, 69–71.
6. Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi*, 70–71.
7. Alamanno Acciaioli, "Cronaca," in Scaramella, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi*, 17.
8. According to the 1378 tax records, Niccholaus Bernardi magr. lived in Borgo San Friano (Frediano) and was taxed at a rate of one florin, one lira, and six soldi, which was paid by Simone Ribellati de Spinis. ASF, Prestanze 332 (Quarter of Santo Spirito), fol. 159r.
9. Acciaioli, "Cronaca," 22.
10. Ibid. "E andossene nella chiesa del Carmino, e uno Nardo di Camaldoli sonava la campana a martello. E così di campana in campana, tutta Firenze sonava a martello"
11. Ibid. "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 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." The authorities had forcefully extracted this information from Simoncino just before the insurrection started.
12. According to the statutes of the powerful wool guild, wool workers were subject to strict laws that denied them the

means to organize or negotiate the value of their labor. On this institutional subjection, see Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, 55–77.

13. Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi*, 70.
14. On the civic iconography of Saint Anne in Florence, see Roger J. Crum and David G. Wilkins, "In Defense of Florentine Republicanism: Saint Anne and Florentine Art, 1343–1575," in *Interpreting Cultural Symbols: Saint Anne in Late Medieval Society*, ed. Kathleen M. Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 131–68.
15. "Lettera d'anonimo sul tumulto dei Ciompi (23 July, 1378)," in Scaramella, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi*, 141. The term the author uses is *serra*, which can mean either siege, barricades, or a general state of military threat. See *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*, ed. Salvatore Battaglia and Giorgio Bàrberi Squarotti (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1961), 18:745.
16. "Lettera d'anonimo," 141. Although the letter is dated three days after the events, and therefore the writer would most likely have discussed the various churches whose bells were rung, there is no reason why he would not have been fully aware of the encircling movement of the alarm, which he foregrounds in his experience.
17. Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, 48 and doc. 22, 111–12. The clergy was in tense conflict with minor guildsmen and the *popolo minuto* because of their ties to wealthy merchants and after the passage of a law stripping them of their privileges.
18. *La democrazia fiorentina*, 445. In a sentence against Piero el Ciri dated December 13, 1379, reference is made to his having been condemned during the political upheaval of the previous year: "Ceperunt se coadunare in aliqua multitudine gentium armatarum et fecerunt pulsari campanas quampluriam ecclesiarum ad martellum divisim et per se a campanis populi et Communis Florentie."
19. On the universal aspects of bells in Christian Europe, see the entries for *cloche* and *clocher* in Fernand Cabrol and Henri Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, vol. 3, pt. 2 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1907), 1966–82.
20. Acciaioli, "Cronaca," 22.
21. He was one of two priors who refused to flee from the palace but was ultimately induced to hand over the keys to the leaders in the square. See Scaramella, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi*, 157.
22. The petitions called for the creation of a single new guild of textile workers. See Acciaioli, "Cronaca," 28. Ultimately, within days, these trades would be organized into three new minor guilds of skilled industrial workers, other artisans in the clothing trade, and the largest, which comprised basically those that the Florentines recognized as Ciompi. On the creation and corporate identities of the three new guilds, see John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200–1575* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006), 165.
23. Acciaioli, "Cronaca," 29.
24. The term *popolo minuto* referred to the nonguild workers of the city, i.e., the disenfranchised population, which was dominated by but not exclusively made up of Ciompi.
25. Acciaioli, "Cronaca," 30.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 31.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., 32.
30. Ibid.
31. Fredona, "Political Conspiracy," 125ff.
32. On the political ethos of the republican regime, see Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus*.
33. Walter of Brienne, the duke of Athens, was brought in to form a government in 1342 amid severe factional unrest among the ruling elites, who quickly accused him of behaving as a tyrant, not least because he formed alliances with the city's underclasses and organized them into military-festive units. On his relationship to the *popolo minuto*, see Najemy, *History of Florence*, 136–37.
34. Trexler sees a break in the ranks of the Ciompi that quickly excluded their most radical elements and their political demands. See Trexler, "Follow the Flag."
35. Unlike the virtual communities we engage with today, which effectively bring together members with similar interests who cannot or do not need to gather together in real space, the temporary communities that are formed in public spaces tend to force people to be aware of their differences and the unwanted presence of others as well, and to confront or accommodate them under the gaze of the rest of the community.
36. See the story of Botticelli's reaction to the obstinate wool weaver in chapter 1. Naturally it would be gatherings of the various groups alone that would counter this larger and highly imperfect collaboration and could very quickly lead to the kinds of revolutionary aftermath that accompany such profound political upheavals. However, to blame such postrevolutionary chaos and violence on the voices in the square is misdirected, since it is the recourse to personal or factional interests, not the continued open and discursive confrontation, that tears such weak coalitions apart.
37. On the socio-political enactment of urban space in trecento Florence, see Stephen J. Milner, "The Florentine Piazza Della Signoria as Practiced Place," in *Renaissance Florence: A Social History*, ed. Roger Crum and John

Paoletti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 83–103.
38. Acciaioli, "Cronaca," 30.
39. For a socio-political analysis of the *potenze* in Florence, see Rosenthal, "The Genealogy of Empires: Ritual Politics and State Building in Early Modern Florence," *I Tatti Studies: Essays in the Renaissance* 8 (1999): 197–234; Rosenthal, "Big Piero, the Empire of the Meadow, and the Parish of Santa Lucia: Claiming Neighbourhood in the Early Modern City," *Journal of Urban History* 32 (2006): 677–92; and Rosenthal, *Kings of the Street: Power, Community, and Ritual in Early Modern Florence* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015).

Epilogue

1. Marcel Proust, *Time Regained*, trans. Andreas Mayor, in *Remembrance of Things Past*, vol. 3 (New York: Random House, 1981), 897.
2. Ibid., 897–98.
3. Alois Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin," trans. Kurt W. Forster and Diane Ghirardo, *Oppositions* 25 (1982): 20–51.
4. Ibid., 34. Notably, one of Riegl's principal models, a recent example at the time, was the rebuilding of the campanile of San Marco in Venice.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., 32.
7. Ibid., 34.
8. Ibid. It is worth pointing out that the phenomenon of replacing original public sculpture with "perfect" copies in Florence has achieved a degree of precision Riegl might not have imagined. As the city becomes more and more a simulacrum of itself and its past, new debates about the status of originals, originality, copies and copying, as well as historical and spatial contexts, emerge that may be tied to similar debates that first emerged in the Renaissance on concepts such as originality, authenticity, and the study of the past through its material remains.
9. Riegl, "Modern Cult of Monuments," 38.
10. Proust, *Time Regained*, 898–900.
11. Mike Gubser, *Time's Visible Surface: Alois Riegl and the Discourse on History and Temporality in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2006), 146.
12. See chapter 1, note 83.
13. Riegl, "Modern Cult of Monuments," 23.
14. Alois Riegl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Augsburg: Dr. B. Filser, 1929), 149. "'Ebenso haben wir etwa angesichts eines alten Kirchturms zu scheiden zwischen den mehr oder minder lokalisierten historischen Erinnerungen verschiedenster Art, die sein Anblick in uns wachruft, und der ganz allgemeinen nicht lokalisierten Vorstellung der Zeit, die der Turm 'mitgemacht' hat."
15. Riegl, "Modern Cult of Monuments," 33; Riegl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, 165. However, this is the most extreme contrast to the historical value, which requires intellectual reflection.
16. Riegl, "Modern Cult of Monuments," 34.
17. Ibid., 37; Riegl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, 171. Riegl uses the more general word *Turm* here, but since he refers to the campanile of San Marco in Venice in the very next paragraph, it is likely he had a bell tower in mind.
18. Riegl, "Modern Cult of Monuments," 38; Riegl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, 172.
19. Mario Carpo, "The Postmodern Cult of Monuments," *Future Anterior: Journal of Historic Preservation, History, Theory, and Criticism* 4, no. 2 (2007): 54–55. I would like to thank Lauren O'Connell, whose work led me to a constellation of related texts that includes Mario Carpo, John Ruskin, and Aldo Rossi.
20. Ibid., 55.
21. Ibid.
22. John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, vol. 1 (New York: John W. Lovell, 1885), I, 15.
23. Ibid., II, 374–76.
24. Ibid., I, 16.
25. Sarah Quill, *Ruskin's Venice: The Stones Revisited* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 181.
26. Ibid., 188.
27. John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, 2nd ed. (1880; repr., New York: Dover; London: Constable, 1989), 180.
28. Ibid., 181.
29. Ibid., 178.
30. Aldo Rossi, *L'architettura della città* (Milan: Clup, 1978), 58.
31. Ibid., 173–74.
32. Ibid., 174.
33. Ibid., 175.

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From the strictly regimented church bells to the freewheeling chatter of civic life, Renaissance Florence was a city built not just of stone but of sound as well. An evocative alternative to the dominant visual understanding of urban spaces, *The Noisy Renaissance* examines the premodern city as an acoustic phenomenon in which citizens used sound to navigate space and society.

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COVER ILLUSTRATION: Silhouette of the Podestà (Bargello, left), the Priors (Palazzo Vecchio, center), and the Badia (right) towers. Photo: author/Dale Mertes.